

MAJOR GENERAL JOSEPH J. REYNOLDS AND HIS DIVISION AT
CHICKAMAUGA: A HISTORICAL ANALYSIS

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MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE

by

DAVID M. KAPAUN, JR., CDR, USN
B.S., Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan, 1981

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Name of Candidate: Commander David M. Kapaun, Jr.

Thesis Title: Major General Joseph J. Reynolds and His Division at Chickamauga: A Historical Analysis

Approved by:

W. Glenn Robertson, Thesis Committee Chairman
W. Glenn Robertson, Ph.D.

Curtis S. King, Member
Major Curtis S. King, M.A.

Accepted this 4th day of June 1999 by:

Philip J. Brookes, Director, Graduate Degree Programs
Philip J. Brookes, Ph.D.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The summer of 1863 was a time of disastrous defeats for the Confederacy. General Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia was repulsed at Gettysburg, and Vicksburg fell to Union forces led by Major General Ulysses S. Grant. Events in Pennsylvania and Mississippi preoccupied strategists on both sides, but their attention was soon focused on Tennessee.

Major General William S. Rosecrans commanded the Union Army of the Cumberland, and General Braxton Bragg commanded the Confederate Army of Tennessee. Major General Joseph J. Reynolds commanded the Fourth Division in Major General George H. Thomas' Fourteenth Corps. The division consisted of three brigades, the First Brigade was commanded by Colonel John T. Wilder; the Second Brigade was commanded by Colonel Edward A. King; and the Third Brigade was commanded by Brigadier General John B. Turchin. There were also three assigned artillery batteries. Reynolds was division commander during the Tullahoma campaign in June-July 1863 in which Wilder's brigade saw action at Hoover's Gap. At Chickamauga, the division was heavily engaged, although for the most part, the three brigades fought separately during the two-day battle.

This thesis will focus on Major General Reynolds' division at Chickamauga. Specifically, how did Reynolds' division perform at Chickamauga? How did Reynolds' leadership play a role in the performance?

In order to analyze the performance of Reynolds and his division, it is also important to consider the events leading up to the battle at Chickamauga. By late 1862,

the Mississippi River, with the exception of Vicksburg and Port Hudson, was in Union hands. President Abraham Lincoln and Secretary of War Stanton were focused on Grant's Vicksburg campaign; however, Rosecrans was expected to follow-up the December 1862 Stones River Battle and proceed against the Army of Tennessee. There was genuine concern that a large portion of Bragg's forces would join with those of General Joseph Johnston, at Vicksburg, compounding Grant's problems.¹ Throughout the spring of 1863 most of middle and eastern Tennessee remained under Confederate control, and Rosecrans sat idle in Mufreesboro, convinced that his army was not ready to mount an offensive. The Army of Tennessee also remained immobile in a defensive position along the Duck River. Bragg was similarly convinced that his army was not prepared for operations against Rosecrans. In fact, a substantial amount of Confederate material and manpower was being diverted to Lee and Johnston.² By the third week of June, under much pressure from Washington, Rosecrans was convinced he must proceed.

Eastern Tennessee, and particularly Chattanooga, was strategically and militarily important to the Union and Confederacy for a number of reasons. For the Union, it was an area that contained many loyalists and was the jumping-off point for a strike into the Deep South. Because of its importance as a railroad hub, Chattanooga would be critical to sustaining an eventual Union move into Georgia. The Confederacy depended on the area for subsistence, particularly pork and corn for the armies in the east. Natural resources, such as copper and saltpeter, were also needed for percussion caps and gunpowder. Eastern Tennessee was also a transportation gateway for the South. The most direct rail connection between Virginia and the western part of the Confederacy ran through Knoxville and the Western and Atlantic Railroad ran southeast toward Atlanta.

Also, the south depended on numerous ordnance depots and hospitals in the area.³

Finally, Bragg's army represented the last credible southern threat west of the Appalachians. Defeating Bragg, and establishing Union control over Eastern Tennessee, would be a devastating blow to the Confederacy.

Once he decided to move, Rosecrans executed a brilliant campaign to maneuver Bragg out of his defensive position. Starting June 24, 1863, the Army of the Cumberland pushed the Army of Tennessee out of Middle Tennessee and into Chattanooga, suffering a minimal cost in casualties, in only ten days. Using boldness, deception, and pursuit, the campaign was a huge success. Reynolds' division, particularly Wilder's brigade, played a key role in this phase of the campaign. If nothing else, Rosecrans proved himself a superb operational planner.⁴

After six weeks of inactivity, the Army of the Cumberland began to move once again, with Chattanooga as its objective. Utilizing deception, as at Tullahoma, Rosecrans maneuvered his army across the Tennessee River south of Chattanooga. Thomas Crittenden's Twenty-First Corps advanced towards Chattanooga, George Thomas' Fourteenth Corps proceeded towards McLemore's cove and Alexander McCook's Twentieth Corps headed towards Alpine, Georgia. Bragg evacuated Chattanooga on September 8. Rosecrans had obtained his objective without a major battle and was convinced he could continue to outmaneuver a demoralized enemy deep into Georgia.⁵

Bragg had other plans and utilized the broken terrain, particularly the Sand and Lookout ridges, to his advantage. He twice attempted to strike at the over-reaching Union Army: against Thomas on September 10 and Crittenden on September 13. In both instances, Union forces withdrew prior to engagement, increasing Bragg's frustration.

This was not the vacillating commander of the Tullahoma campaign. Strengthened by reinforcements, Bragg was looking for a fight, and the opportunity to strike a blow at the fragmented Army of the Cumberland had been lost.⁶

Rosecrans was clearly providing Bragg openings that could prove disastrous for the Army of the Cumberland. However, he was finally convinced that Bragg was not retreating towards Atlanta, and he directed the consolidation of his army. Fortunately for the Union, Bragg provided Rosecrans five days to accomplish the mission. By September 17, Thomas and McCook had consolidated forces in McLemore's cove, just west of Chickamauga Creek. Both corps then proceeded northward, towards Crittenden's corps, at Lee and Gordon's Mill. On September 18, Bragg attempted to turn the Union left by sending units across Chickamauga Creek via Reed's and Alexander's bridges. Brigadier General Bushrod Johnson, with some elements of Lieutenant General James Longstreet's Corps from Virginia advanced west of the creek. Major General William Walker's and Major General Simon Buckner's Corps also crossed the creek. Meanwhile, Thomas' corps had conducted a night march northward, passing behind Crittenden's corps.⁷ This movement was unknown to Bragg, who still believed he had forces positioned on the Union left flank. Rosecrans, concerned with his left flank, continued to shift units north throughout the night, stretching the Union line. The stage was set for a major battle in the thick forest along Chickamauga Creek.

The tangled brush and heavily wooded, rough terrain surrounding Chickamauga Creek provided some challenging tactical problems. By September 1863, brigades, and occasionally divisions, were the basic maneuver unit.⁸ The exception at Chickamauga was the assault by Longstreet's corps; however, inadequate command and control

inhibited success even after a rout. Uncoordinated, piecemeal assaults were the norm, and as a result strong defensive positions could usually withstand superior forces. With few exceptions, this was true at Chickamauga as well. Unclear intent coupled with restricted terrain and unsophisticated tactics resulted in tremendous losses.

Chapter 2 will look into General Reynolds' background before the Civil War and his actions prior to the Chickamauga Campaign. It is important to understand the man in order to evaluate his division's performance at Chickamauga. Specifically, what was his background prior to and during the Civil War? What type of performance merited advancement to major general? What experiences prepared him for division command at Chickamauga? What was the importance of the Tullahoma campaign for Reynolds and his division? How did the division perform at Hoover's Gap? Did action at Tullahoma prepare Reynolds for Chickamauga? Are there significant events that will have an effect on what happened at Chickamauga?

Chapter 3 will analyze the prelude to Chickamauga and unit readiness. How did the units function, train and prepare? How experienced were the various regiments? What was their composition and from where did they come?

Chapter 4 focuses on Reynolds division at Chickamauga on September 19, 1863. What mission did Reynolds have as he was directed towards Chickamauga? What were Reynolds' orders for the first day? How was Reynolds' division arrayed and why? What was Reynolds' role in his division's performance? Did the division accomplish the mission? In what specific actions did the division participate? Did some units perform better than others did and why? What happened to various units throughout the day?

Where was General Reynolds? What was the division disposition at the end of the first day?

Chapter 5 will detail division action on September 20, 1863. Specific questions include: What was the division disposition at the start of the second day? What was the mission of the various brigades? What specific units were engaged and against whom? How successful were the various division units? What role did General Reynolds play in his division's performance? How did General Reynolds' actions affect the Union effort? What was the division disposition at the end of the second day? Overall, how successful was the division in carrying out its mission?

Chapter 6 will conclude the thesis and analyze the battle. Specifically, how did the division perform September 19-20, 1863? How did General Reynolds perform as a division commander. How did the performance of Reynolds and his division affect the outcome of the battle? What can the leaders of today learn from the performance of Reynolds' division at Chickamauga? The answers to these questions will provide the basis for the conclusions.

¹Peter Cozzens, *This Terrible Sound* (Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 13.

²Dr. W. G. Robertson et al., *Staff Ride Handbook for the Battle of Chickamauga, 18-20 September 1863* (Ft. Leavenworth, KS: U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 1992), 49.

³*Ibid.*, 47.

⁴John McElroy, "The Important Position of Kentucky and Tennessee," *The National Tribune*, 23 August 1906, 1.

⁵Ibid., 7.

⁶Ibid., 8.

⁷Robertson, *Staff Ride Handbook*, 52.

⁸Ibid., 30.

CHAPTER 2

REYNOLDS BEFORE CHICKAMAUGA

Joseph Jones Reynolds held a wide variety of assignments during his military career. In the Civil War years he was well known to a number of influential and powerful leaders, both military and civilian, and during the Civil War he filled positions in western Virginia, Tennessee, Alabama, and Texas. His early success in western Virginia in 1861 gained him the confidence of Major General William S. Rosecrans, which would assist him in the future. As a division commander in the Army of the Cumberland, his unit played a key role in maneuvering Bragg's forces out of middle Tennessee at Hoover's Gap. Reynolds' early career and his division's performance during his initial assignment in the Army of the Cumberland through the Tullahoma campaign will be examined.

Reynolds' formative years were spent in the upper Midwest and eventually took him to his first military assignment. The Reynolds family lived in Flemingsburg, Kentucky, and Joseph Jones was born on January 4, 1822. He was the sixth son and seventh child of Edward and Sarah (Longley).¹ In 1837, his father, a hatter, moved the family to Lafayette, Indiana, and young Joseph entered Wabash College in Crawfordsville a year later. In 1839 he entered the United States Military Academy at West Point and graduated with the class of 1843.² Reynolds excelled at West Point, finishing tenth in a class of thirty-nine.³ Among his classmates was Ulysses S. Grant with whom he maintained a lasting friendship.⁴ Upon commissioning as a brevet second lieutenant (artillery) on July 1, 1843, he was assigned to the Fourth Artillery Regiment at Fort Monroe, Virginia.

The early years in the military were uneventful. Reynolds described the existence at Fort Monroe as somewhat isolated; however, his unit kept itself entertained with band concerts and the theater.⁵ He maintained close contact with his brother Jimmy, with whom he entered a business partnership prior to the Civil War. It was also at Fort Monroe that Reynolds was to encounter the first of numerous medical problems that would plague his military career.⁶ He developed an eye problem that he decided to leave untreated. It does not appear to have impaired his abilities. In 1844 he was transferred to Carlisle, Pennsylvania, for garrison duty.

Unlike many of his West Point classmates, Reynolds' first operational assignment was not in the Mexican War. In 1845 he was assigned to General Taylor's force engaged in the occupation of Texas as a member of the Third Artillery Regiment. He did not participate in any engagements. After a year in Texas, he was promoted to a permanent second lieutenant on May 11, 1846, and assigned to the teaching staff of the United States Military Academy. He spent the next nine years as an instructor of natural and experimental philosophy. Due to his extensive time at West Point, Reynolds made many long-term acquaintances with numerous alumni. Rather than the experience of the Mexican War, perhaps his prewar professional reputation was built on these personal relationships.

Shortly after his return to West Point, Reynolds assumed the responsibility of husband and father. On December 3, 1846, he married Mary Elizabeth Bainbridge. Joseph and Mary had two sons and two daughters. Both his sons entered military service: one as a naval officer and one as an army officer.⁷ He appears to have been happily married and not distracted by family health problems.

From 1855-1857, he was assigned as first lieutenant, Third Artillery Regiment, on frontier duty at Fort Washita, Indian Territories. He resigned his commission on February 28, 1857, and became a professor of mechanics and engineering at Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri. In 1860 he returned to Lafayette and opened a successful grocery business with his brother Jimmie.⁸

Like many former military officers, Reynolds answered the call to arms during the spring of 1861. On April 27, 1861, Reynolds was appointed a colonel of the three-month regiment of the Tenth Indiana Volunteers and assigned command of Camp Morton, Indianapolis from April to May 1861. He applied his military knowledge in organizing and training the new troops and was appointed a Brigadier General of United States volunteers on May 17, 1861.⁹ His first operational assignment was as a brigade commander in western Virginia under Major General William Rosecrans.

Reynolds' first operational Civil War assignment had a lasting impact on his military career. In the summer of 1861, Union and Confederate armies were positioned in western Virginia. The Confederates were concerned that a determined Union offensive could push through western Virginia and threaten Staunton, cutting off eastern Virginia from the fertile Shenandoah Valley. On July 24, 1861, Rosecrans placed Reynolds in command of the First Brigade of the Army of Occupation of western Virginia, Department of the Ohio: essentially all Federal forces in the Cheat Mountain, Huttonsville, and Elkwater area.¹⁰ It was an independent command, and Reynolds concentrated on Confederate forces in the Kanawha Valley. As in most cases early in the war, Reynolds was put into a position because of his West Point background and frontier experience.

Reynolds made the most of this opportunity. His forces consisted of eight regiments and three batteries, totaling approximately nine thousand men. They were placed in defensive positions along the Staunton-Parkersburg Pike and Huntersville-Huttonsville Pike. Brigadier General W. W. Loring led the Confederate forces arrayed against Reynolds. Confederate President Jefferson Davis directed General Robert E. Lee to coordinate overall Confederate activities in western Virginia. Shortly after arriving on August 3, 1861, Lee formulated plans to assault the Union positions on Cheat Mountain. In a letter to his wife, Lee wrote, "I find that our old friend, J.J. Reynolds, of West Point memory, is in front of us."¹¹ Before the attack started, the weather in August turned miserable, with snow and freezing temperatures at the higher elevations. Reynolds took this opportunity to fortify his positions.

The Confederate plan was sound, but its execution was not successful. In September, weather conditions improved and Loring prepared to move. Lee's plan called for an assault force of two thousand men, led by Colonel Albert Rust of the Third Arkansas Infantry. The Confederate mission was to turn Reynolds' position on Cheat mountain summit.¹² In an attempt to gain the Union rear, the various units marched through bone-chilling creeks and scaled cliffs. Despite the travails, all units arrived in place, as planned, at dawn on September 12, 1861. The signal for a general assault was to be the report of Rust's batteries. After a brief engagement, Rust deemed the Union position too strong, and failed to sound the signal. The assault did not occur.

Despite his scattered defense, Reynolds made his presence known during critical engagements. In the Cheat Mountain engagement, Confederate forces under Loring also attempted to overcome the Union outpost at Elkwater. Close to sunset, and fresh from

the Cheat Mountain engagement, Reynolds came riding out among the Union skirmishers. He quickly scanned the battlefield, handed a note to an orderly, and directed a barrage of fire from a ten pound Parrot gun to halt the enemy column.¹³ This ended the activity on September 12.

While the fighting was not on a large scale, Reynolds had proven himself an able leader early in the war, demonstrating competence and energy. With the success of Rosecrans at Carnifex Ferry, the Confederate offensive in western Virginia had failed, and the majority of the state lay in Union hands. In support of Rosecrans' plan, Reynolds had performed well in his first command, successfully carrying out an assignment of great responsibility, and prevailing over forces led by Lee. Rosecrans, obviously impressed, said, "General Reynolds, with rare intelligence and sagacity, kept him [Lee] perpetually harassed."¹⁴

Soon, however, personal circumstances prompted Reynolds to resign from service for the second time. Late in 1861, his brother and senior partner in the grocery business died and on January 2, 1862, Reynolds submitted his resignation. He felt it necessary to resign due to the time needed to sort out the family business. The endorsement letter by Rosecrans said: "General Reynolds has won my esteem and admiration for the prudence, valor and energy of his distinguished command in the Cheat Mountain District. He deserves well of his country for the masterly manner in which he foiled the Rebel attack in September."¹⁵

Although no longer in the service, Reynolds remained active in the Union war effort, and he eventually joined the active duty ranks once again. He assisted the state of Indiana in organizing regiments while sorting out his personal affairs. On August 21,

1862, he re-entered active service and was commissioned a Colonel in the Seventy-fifth Indiana Volunteer regiment and became a Brigadier General of U.S. volunteers on September 17, 1862. On November 29, 1862, he, along with eighteen other brigadier generals, became a Major General of U.S. volunteers.¹⁶

By the time of Reynolds' arrival in Tennessee in December 1862, one of his former mentors had indeed risen to a position of prominence. Rosecrans assumed command of the Fourteenth Corps, which would eventually become known as the Army of the Cumberland. The army had been divided into a Right Wing, Center Wing, and Left Wing, and on December 11, 1862, Reynolds was assigned command of Twelfth Division, Center Wing, commanded by Major General George Thomas. He relieved Brigadier General Ebenezer Dumont who was sick.¹⁷ The divisions and brigades were renumbered on December 19, 1862, and Reynolds' division was redesignated the Fifth Division (formerly the Twelfth Division) and contained the First Brigade (formerly the Thirty-third Brigade), commanded by Colonel Albert Hall, the Second Brigade (formerly the Fortieth Brigade), commanded by Colonel Abram Miller, the Eighteenth Indiana Light Battery, commanded by Captain Eli Lilly and the Nineteenth Indiana Light Battery, commanded by Captain Samuel Harris.¹⁸

Reynolds' quick receipt of a division was probably due to his success in western Virginia, association with Rosecrans and reward for his efforts in assisting Indiana in the war effort. His years of teaching at West Point had also made him well known to a number of influential men in leadership positions. Events in western Virginia had shown he was a proven entity who wholeheartedly supported the Union cause.

Reynolds' division would not play a key role in the first large engagement after his arrival. On December 31, 1862, the armies of Rosecrans and Bragg clashed at the Battle of Stones River. During the three-day battle, Reynolds' entire division was deployed near Gallatin, Tennessee along the Louisville and Nashville Railroad; "safeguarding the Union supply routes from Morgan's cavalry."¹⁹ Reynolds did not get the opportunity to lead a division in a pitched battle and his first field command in a year was uneventful.

The winter and spring of 1862 did not present an opportunity to prepare for a large set-piece battle. The Army of the Cumberland remained in winter quarters in Murfreesboro, largely inactive. On January 9, 1863, the Army of the Cumberland was reorganized into three corps. A new and smaller Fourteenth Corps was commanded by George Thomas, the Twentieth Corps was formed from Major General Alexander McCook's former Right Wing and the Twenty-first Corps was organized from Major General Thomas Crittenden's former Left Wing. Reynolds' Fifth Division was assigned to the Fourteenth Corps.²⁰

During this period, Reynolds and his division acquitted themselves well, although the engagements were mainly skirmishes with Confederate cavalry. On February 3, 1863, three thousand infantry and five hundred cavalry under Reynolds reconnoitered north and east of Murfreesboro to search for any Confederate cavalry units in the area. The division encountered a unit of Morgan's men, and after a brief encounter, the Confederate cavalry fled. On the trip back to Stones River, Confederate cavalry attacked the division's wagon trains and Reynolds quickly dispatched infantry to handle the two hundred Confederates. This assault was countered without a loss, and Reynolds had

demonstrated the ability to organize and quickly move his division.²¹ Again, the engagements during this period were minor skirmishes, not pitched battles, and did not provide the type of experience that would be required at Chickamauga.

The Army of the Cumberland was again reorganized on June 8, 1863. The Fourth Division, Fourteen Corps was transferred to the Reserve Corps under Major General Gordon Granger, and Reynolds' Fifth Division was redesignated the Fourth Division. His command consisted of the First Brigade commanded by Colonel John Wilder, the Second Brigade, commanded by Colonel Albert Hall (During the Tullahoma campaign, June 23 to July 7, the brigade was commanded by Colonel Milton Robinson due to Hall's illness), and the Third Brigade, commanded by Brigadier General George Crook.²² The new Third Brigade came to the Army of the Cumberland from the Army of Kentucky.²³ The division's assigned artillery included the Eighteenth Indiana Light Battery commanded by Captain Eli Lilly (attached to the First Brigade), the Nineteenth Indiana Light Battery commanded by Captain Samuel Harris (attached to the Second Brigade), and the Twenty-First Indiana Light Battery commanded by Captain William Andrew (attached to the Third Brigade).

For five months, the Army of the Cumberland was primarily occupied in pursuing Confederate cavalry. By June, Rosecrans' lack of movement had thoroughly frustrated General Halleck and President Lincoln. Cajoling and threats led to ultimatums. Bragg's army was entrenched along the north bank of the Duck River with the Elk River thirty miles to the south as a second line of defense. The terrain was particularly well suited for defense, consisting of a maze of ridges, canyons and gorges as well as the river. Through

these hills, the major roads connecting Murfreesboro and Tullahoma passed through Hoover's, Guy's and Liberty gaps.

On June 23, Rosecrans initiated the opening moves of the Tullahoma Campaign, and by June 24 the entire army was on the march. Bragg expected Rosecrans to assault the middle of his lines around Shelbyville, and if forced to retire, he planned to fall back on heavily fortified positions around Tullahoma. Rosecrans reinforced this idea using Major General Gordon Granger's Reserve Corps, creating the illusion of a main effort on the Shelbyville front. The Cavalry Corps under Major General David Stanley was to aid in the deception, with Brigadier General Robert Mitchell's First Division beginning the movement with a vigorous attack on General Wheeler along the Eagleville Road. Stanley, with Robert Minty's First Brigade of Brigadier General John Turchin's Second Division, proceeded directly down the Shelbyville road and the two columns united near Middleton. This force then drove Wheeler's Corps back into General Polk's position in Shelbyville. Crittenden's Twenty-first Corps proceeded toward Bradyville, threatened Bragg's right flank and moved towards Manchester. Thomas' corps assaulted down the Manchester Pike through Hoover's Gap, with McCook's corps on his right.

The Confederates guarding Hoover's Gap were caught off guard by the speed and surprise of Wilder's brigade. At 3 A.M. on June 24, the First Brigade moved from camp, six miles north of Murfreesboro with the rest of Reynolds' Fourth Division (the Second Brigade commanded by Colonel Milton Robinson and Brigadier General George Crook's Third Brigade) following in advance of the rest of the Fourteenth Corps. A persistent light rain fell throughout the march. They proceeded down the Manchester Turnpike, towards Hoover's Gap, a narrow valley, seven miles in length, with three hundred-foot

hills on its sides, and a good, macadamized road. Wilder's orders were to "proceed to the entrance of Hoover's Gap, feel the position of the enemy, and wait the arrival of the supporting infantry."²⁴ Confederate pickets were encountered near Big Spring, and the advance guard, consisting of five companies of the Seventy-Second Indiana Regiment, drove them back. Wilder's brigade also routed the First Kentucky Cavalry, which was dispatched to meet the attack. Elements of the First Kentucky covered the withdrawal of the rest of the regiment as Wilder's brigade continued to push through the gap. Wilder took possession of the hills at the south end, the very terrain the Confederates had planned to use for their defense.²⁵ Reynolds and the rest of the division were still six miles away.

Wilder reacted swiftly as events rapidly unfolded. The sound of drums alerted Wilder to additional Confederate movement and he expeditiously arrayed his brigade into battle positions. He probably realized that Reynolds and the rest of the division was not in a position to support his efforts, but he was determined to hold the ground. Wilder stationed the Seventy-Second Indiana at the right of the brigade, on a hill near a graveyard and Lilly's battery was placed in front of the regiment. The One Hundred Twenty-Third Illinois Regiment was placed on either side of Lilly's battery and four rifled Rodman guns were placed on a secondary hill pointed towards Fairfield. Two companies of the Ninety-Eighth Illinois Regiment took station on a hill on the left side of the gap, and the Seventeenth Indiana Regiment was placed a quarter mile to the right. The remainder of the Ninety-Eighth Illinois was placed in reserve between and slightly behind the One Hundred Twenty-Third Illinois and Seventeenth Indiana. By this time, Stewart's Division of Hardee's Corps, stationed near Fairfield, had been alerted and was

approaching the south end of the gap. General William Bate's Brigade was in advance to reinforce the First Kentucky.²⁶ Confederate pickets were sighted in less than thirty minutes, and soon afterwards the Twentieth Tennessee and Thirty-Seventh Georgia regiments emerged from the woods.

The hastily employed Union defense was to prove effective. The murderous fire of the Spencer rifles by the One Hundred Twenty-Third Illinois forced the advancing Confederates to fall back. Bate next tried to turn Wilder's right by sending his entire brigade, led by the Twentieth Tennessee, against the Seventeenth Indiana. The fighting was ferocious, and the Indiana regiment began to give ground, so Wilder sent the Ninety-Eighth Illinois for support.²⁷ This turned the tide, and soon the Confederate advance halted, eventually withdrawing down the hill in confusion. Two Confederate regiments also attempted to take Lilly's battery, but they were repulsed by double shotted canister and enfilade fire from the Seventy-Second Indiana. Bate reorganized his brigade, brought up his reserves and made preparations with General Bushrod Johnson to renew the attack on Wilder's position.

During this time, Captain Rice, Reynolds' adjutant, rode up to Wilder with orders from Reynolds to withdraw immediately. Rice explained that Stewart's entire division was enroute and the rest of Reynolds' division was still six miles away. Wilder refused to comply with the order, maintaining that he could hold his position.²⁸ Captain Rice threatened Wilder with arrest and claimed that he would turn over the brigade to Colonel Miller. Wilder refused the arrest, and Rice returned to the division just as Bate and Johnson launched the last assault of the day. Shortly thereafter, Rosecrans arrived, along with Thomas and Brigadier General Thomas S. Garfield, Rosecrans' Chief of Staff.

Wilder explained his reasoning for disobeying the order and assumed responsibility for his actions. Rosecrans shook Wilder's hand and congratulated him on holding the position. Reynolds soon rode up and Rosecrans said to him, "Wilder has done right, promote him."²⁹ Reynolds, under the circumstances, had to agree. Thomas bestowed the moniker "Lightning Brigade" for the day's action.

The speed and audacity of Wilder's efforts certainly allowed the Fourth Division to achieve success and gain a foothold in Hoover's Gap. Securing such an important route through the rugged country enabled Rosecrans to quickly bring Thomas' and McCook's corps into a position to seriously threaten Bragg. But, perhaps Reynolds would have positioned his other two brigades in a supporting position if he knew that Wilder would provoke a pitched battle. As it was, Reynolds had virtually no role in the day's events. Although the effort succeeded, and earned praise from Rosecrans and Thomas, Reynolds probably did not forget that Wilder did not follow explicit orders. It would be safe to assume that a lingering strain existed between the division commander and his headstrong subordinate. Wilder's brigade operated independently for the rest of the campaign.

Although only the First Brigade had seen action that day, the division later acquitted itself well. By the evening of June 24, Reynolds had his entire division in position at Hoover's Gap, and on June 25, additional forces strengthened the position. Colonel Benjamin Scribner's brigade of Major General Lovell Rousseau's division was also brought up to support the Union batteries and form a picket line. Thomas received orders from Rosecrans to attack the next morning and drive Stewart's division back towards Fairfield, and if successful, move at once towards Manchester.³⁰ Colonel Henry

Hambright's Second brigade of Rousseau's division also moved into the gap, in anticipation of events.

Although not the Union main effort, the Fourth Division had played a key role in maneuvering Bragg's army out of position. Crittenden's corps had gotten bogged down in their march towards Manchester, and it was Reynolds who first reached the city. Early on June 26, Thomas brought Brigadier General John Brannon and Brigadier General James Negley's divisions into Hoover's gap. By 10:30 A.M. all the Fourteenth Corps units were in position, and Rousseau and Brannon's divisions hit Stewart's left flank and forced him to retire toward Fairfield. Thomas directed Reynolds to proceed toward Manchester, and by late afternoon Wilder's brigade had secured the passage, opening the road. On June 27 Reynolds's entire division occupied Manchester and Rosecrans moved his headquarters to the city.³¹

Bragg's army was not trapped into fighting a decisive battle. On June 30, the Army of the Cumberland formed a line of battle, and prepared to assault Bragg's forces in Tullahoma. However, by the next morning, it was apparent that Bragg had evacuated Tullahoma and retreated south of the Elk River. For the next three days, Rosecrans conducted a general pursuit, however, by July 4, Bragg's army had essentially proceeded towards eastern Tennessee. Regardless, Bragg had given up Middle Tennessee without a fight, which boded well for the Army of the Cumberland.

With the exception of the First Brigade, the Fourth Division was not seriously engaged during the Tullahoma Campaign. Reynolds did not play a major role in the First Brigade's engagement at Hoover's Gap. Wilder's unexpected provocation of an engagement preempted Reynolds' ability to provide support. Nonetheless, Wilder's

brigade had performed well as an advance unit, playing a key role in the success of the campaign. The superior firepower of the brigade was proven at Hoover's Gap, however, the engagement brought out an independent streak in the First Brigade commander. Strained relations were not conducive to preparations for the Chickamauga campaign.

¹Dumas Malone, ed., *Dictionary of American Biography* (New York, NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1935), 521.

²Ezra Warner, *Generals in Blue, Lives of Union Commanders* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1964), 398.

³U.S. Military Academy, *Official Register of the Officers and Cadets of the United States Military Academy* (West Point, NY, 1843), 9.

⁴Warner, *Generals in Blue*, 398.

⁵Joseph J. Reynolds to Jimmie Reynolds, 11 December 1843, at Fort Monroe, Virginia, W. H. Smith Memorial Library, collection number SC1259F2, Indiana Historical Society, Indianapolis, IN.

⁶Sarah Reynolds to James Reynolds, 3 September 1843, at Lafayette, Indiana, W.H. Smith Memorial Library, collection number SC1259F2, Indiana Historical Society, Indianapolis, IN.

⁷Dumas, *American Biography*, 522.

⁸*Ibid.*, 521.

⁹Warner, *Generals in Blue*, 398.

¹⁰Jack Zinn, *R. E. Lee's Cheat Mountain Campaign* (Parsons, WV: McClain Printing Company, 1974), 12.

¹¹*Ibid.*, 77.

¹²*Ibid.*, 114

¹³*Ibid.*, 181.

¹⁴*Report of the Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War*, 1865, vol. 3 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1866), 238.

¹⁵William S. Rosecrans endorsement on J. J. Reynolds resignation letter, 2 January 1862, National Archives and Records Administration, collection number RG94 1295 ACP 1871, Washington, DC.

¹⁶*The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, 70 vols. in 128 parts (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1880-1901), Series 1, vol. 30, Pt. 3, 395. (Cited hereafter as *O.R.* with no series or volume indicated unless it is other than series 1, vol. 30.)

¹⁷Frank T. Welcher, *The Union Army 1861-1865, Volume II: Organization and Operations, The Western Theater* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1993), 159.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, 163.

¹⁹*Index to The Executive Documents of the Senate of the United States at the Special Session of March 1863* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1863), 51.

²⁰Welcher, *The Union Army*, 269.

²¹*Cincinnati Gazette*, "Success of General Reynold's Expedition...A Force of Morgan's Men Repulsed," 20 February 1863, 1.

²²Welcher, *The Union Army*, 840.

²³*Ibid.*

²⁴Henry Campbell, Journal of the Eighteenth Indiana Battery, regarding Battle of Hoover's Gap, Henry Campbell Manuscript, Indiana State University, Indianapolis, IN, 1907.

²⁵Glenn Sunderland, "The Battle of Hoover's Gap," *Civil War Times Illustrated*, 15 June 1967, 38.

²⁶*Ibid.*

²⁷John Wilder, *The National Tribune*, 5.

²⁸Sunderland, *Hoover's Gap*, 40.

²⁹*Ibid.*

³⁰Welcher, *The Union Army*, 835.

³¹*Ibid.*, 836.

CHAPTER 3

PRELUDE TO BATTLE

There were numerous leadership changes within Reynolds' division after Tullahoma. Brigadier General John B. Turchin assumed command of the Third Brigade on July 29, and Colonel Edward King assumed command of the Second Brigade on August 2. Experience among the brigades varied, and most of the regiments had not seen much battle. In this chapter the training and experience of the division's units and the commanders will be examined, and the division's movements to the Chickamauga battlefield will be analyzed.

The short period prior to the battle did not provide much time to build division cohesiveness. The Army of the Cumberland was ordered into camp on July 5, to await supplies from the depot at Murfreesboro and to prepare for a further advance. This was a time of rest and refit for the Fourth Division, which was encamped at Decherd, along with the Fourteenth Corps headquarters.¹

The brigades and regiments of the Fourth Division as they were organized for the battle will be examined. The First Brigade was organized as follows:

First Brigade, Colonel John T. Wilder

Seventeenth Indiana

Seventy-Second Indiana

Ninety-Second Illinois

Ninety-Eighth Illinois

One Hundred Twenty-Third Illinois

Eighteenth Indiana Battery

Colonel John T. Wilder led the First Brigade during the Battle of Chickamauga. He was born in the Catskill Mountain settlement of Hunter in Greene County, New York, on January 31, 1830. He had a family history of distinguished military service. His great-grandfather, Seth Wilder, lost a leg in the battle of Bunker Hill in the Revolutionary War. His grandfather, Seth Wilder, Jr., was at the battles of Saratoga, Monmouth, and Stoney Point where he received a bayonet wound. His father, Reuben Wilder, fought in the War of 1812 at Plattsburg and Sackett's Harbor.² John Wilder moved to Columbus, Ohio, at age nineteen and worked in a foundry where he learned drafting, pattern making, and mill-wrighting skills. He was ambitious, hard working, and received numerous promotions. In 1857, Wilder moved to Greensburg, Indiana, where he invented many pieces of hydraulic equipment. By the spring of 1861, he was nationally known as an expert in the field of hydraulics.³

At the onset of the Civil War, Wilder had his foundry produce two six-pound cannons for the regiment he envisioned. He initially planned to start a company of light artillery; however, the artillery company did not fit into the local community's plans. Captain Wilder and his company were mustered into Company A, Seventeenth Indiana Regiment, on June 12, 1861. The regiment was directed to western Virginia and participated in the defeat of General Robert E. Lee at the Battles of Cheat Mountain and Greenbriar. It was here that Reynolds knew him, and he performed admirably as a company commander in Reynolds' brigade. In the fall of 1861 he was promoted to lieutenant colonel and soon became commander of the Seventeenth Indiana Infantry Regiment. In 1862, the regiment took part in the siege of Corinth and Munfordville and the battle of Perryville in Kentucky.

Wilder was well known throughout the army as an innovator. He issued hatchets to his brigade instead of bayonets because of the multipurpose utility. His combat experience had also taught him that the enemy cavalry were quick and elusive, and superior technology was required to make infantry units more effective. Wilder requested and received permission from Rosecrans on February 12, 1863, to mount his infantry and let them fight with the best available weapon.⁴ He desired a quick-repeating rifle that could provide superior firepower. After a demonstration by Christopher Spencer, Wilder arranged through his hometown bank to purchase the Spencer repeating rifle for his brigade. He cosigned a note for each individual weapon and received reimbursement by pay deduction.⁵ The weapon had seven cartridges to a magazine and ten refills in the cartridge cases for each rifle. He then obtained the mounts by sending out teams to seize available horses from the countryside, leaving vouchers redeemable for compensation by the U.S. government.⁶ His creative approach to problem solving and aggressive leadership style caused his brigade to become the workhorse of the Army of the Cumberland. Wilder's men were superbly armed and well suited for independent duty. The unique nature of this combat arm and Wilder's independence created problems for the traditionally schooled Reynolds, although, Wilder and his brigade operated independent of Reynolds at Chickamauga.

Seventeenth Indiana, Major William T. Jones

The Seventeenth Indiana Regiment was organized in Indianapolis, Indiana, and mustered into service for three years on June 12, 1861.⁷ Colonel Milo S. Hascall was the first regimental commander. On July 1, 1861, the regiment was sent to Parkersburg, western Virginia, and was part of Reynolds' command at Cheat Mountain on September

12, 1861. In November 1861 the regiment was sent to Louisville, Kentucky, and assigned to Wood's division, Hascall's brigade in Buell's Army of the Cumberland. The regiment participated in the siege of Corinth and marched with Buell's army during the campaign of northern Alabama and middle Tennessee. On August 30, 1862 at McMinnville, Tennessee, the regiment had an engagement with General Nathan B. Forrest's cavalry, routing the Confederate forces and holding the field. The regiment marched to Louisville, Kentucky, and fought a battle with Bragg's rearguard at Munfordville, Kentucky on September 25, 1862. Colonel Hascall was promoted to Brigadier General of Volunteers on October 5, 1862 and Lieutenant Colonel Wilder was assigned as regimental commander. From October 1, 1862 to February 1, 1863, the regiment was kept busy pursuing Confederate cavalry led by General Morgan. On February 12, 1863, the regiment was mounted and on May 18, 1863 received the Spencer Repeating rifle.⁸

On June 24, 1863, the unit was engaged at Hoover's Gap, holding off four regiments of Confederate infantry with its Spencer Rifles while suffering sixty-one killed and wounded.⁹

Seventy-Second Indiana, Colonel Abram O. Miller

The Seventy-Second Indiana Regiment was organized at Lafayette, Indiana and first mustered in Indianapolis, Indiana on August 16, 1862. It left the state for Lebanon, Kentucky on August 17, 1862 and participated in operations against Confederate cavalry led by John Morgan from October 1862 to January 1863. The regiment was mounted and received the Spencer Repeating Rifle on March 17, 1863, and first saw action at Hoover's Gap on June 24, 1863.¹⁰

Ninety-Second Illinois, Colonel Smith D. Atkins

The Ninety-Second Illinois Regiment was mustered in September 1862. On July 1, 1863, Colonel Atkins requested assignment of the regiment to Wilder's brigade of mounted infantry.¹¹ On July 10, 1863 the regiment was detached from Granger's corps and assigned to Wilder's brigade in Reynolds' division. The regiment received one hundred and forty excess Spencer Repeating rifles from the brigade. It was eventually mounted in late July after capturing 1,700 horses and mules while on an expedition under Colonel John J. Funkhouser.

Ninety-Eighth Illinois, Colonel John J. Funkhouser

The Ninety-Eighth Illinois Regiment was organized in Centralia, Illinois in September 1862 by Colonel John J. Funkhouser, and mustered on September 3, 1862. On September 8, 1862 the regiment was ordered to Louisville, Kentucky and while enroute, the train was thrown from the track resulting in eight men killed and seventy-five wounded.¹² The regiment was originally assigned to the Fortieth Brigade, the Twelfth Division, under Brigadier General Dumont. During December 1862 and January 1863, it conducted operations against Confederate cavalry led by General Morgan. On March 14, 1863 the regiment was mounted and on May 31, 1863 it received Spencer Rifles.¹³ The regiment saw action at Hoovers Gap, sustaining one killed and five wounded.

One Hundred Twenty-Third Illinois, Colonel James Monroe

Colonel James Monroe organized the One Hundred Twenty-Third Illinois Regiment at Mattoon, Illinois. It was mustered into service at Camp Terry, Mattoon on September 6, 1862 with James Monroe commanding.¹⁴ On September 19, 1862 the

Regiment went by train to Louisville, Kentucky to reinforce the Union fortifications against Bragg's army. On October 1, 1862 the regiment was assigned to the Thirty-Third Brigade, Fourth Division in McCook's Corps and was on the march into Kentucky. The regiment first saw action at the battle of Perryville, where it lost thirty-six killed and one hundred and eighty wounded.¹⁵ During December 1862 to January 1863 the regiment pursued Confederate cavalry led by General Morgan.

On March 20, 1863, the regiment was engaged with Morgan's cavalry near Milton, Tennessee, suffering one killed and several wounded. It was mounted and armed with Spencer Repeating rifles on May 6, 1863 and assigned to Wilder's brigade. On June 24, 1863, along with the Seventeenth Indiana, the regiment was engaged at Hoover's Gap and lost several men killed and wounded.

Eighteenth Indiana Battery, Captain Eli Lilly

The battery was organized at Indianapolis and mustered on August 20, 1862. It saw service in the campaign against Bragg in October 1862 and participated in the pursuit of Morgan from December 1862 to January 1863.¹⁶ The battery saw action at Hoover's Gap in June 1863.

The First Brigade was the most inexperienced group in Fourth Division. Most of the brigade had mustered in the late summer of 1862 and had not been involved in any significant battles. Duty mainly involved rear security and pursuit of Confederate cavalry. Due to Wilder's leadership, the brigade had, in a relatively short period of time, rearmed and mounted, and its training and proficiency served it well at Hoover's Gap. The men of the brigade had become accustomed to operating independently and felt comfortable with their abilities. Unit esprit de corps and morale were certainly high

when General Thomas dubbed them the Lightning Brigade after the performance at Hoover's Gap. Wilder had no formally military schooling or experience, but he was an aggressive, proactive and creative leader. He had demonstrated an independent streak during the Tullahoma Campaign, which perhaps strained his brigade's relationship with Reynolds. Also, while in camp at Decherd, there was a feeling in the brigade that Reynolds disapproved of the men's conduct in general and was not supportive of their needs.¹⁷ After the Tullahoma campaign, the regiment would operate independently, and not under the direct control of Reynolds.

The Second Brigade was organized as follows:

Second Brigade, Colonel Edward A. King, Colonel Milton S. Robinson

(Robinson assumed command on 20 September, 1863 after King was killed)

Sixty-Eighth Indiana

Seventy-Fifth Indiana

One Hundred First Indiana

One Hundred Fifth Ohio

Nineteenth Indiana Battery

Colonel Edward A. King was born in Cambridge, Washington county, New York State in 1814. In 1831 he applied for admission to the United States Military Academy, but he was not accepted.¹⁸ During the Texas struggle for independence, he raised a company in New Orleans and reported to General Sam Houston. He was appointed a captain of infantry in the Regular Army on March 9, 1847, and assigned to the Fifteenth United States Infantry on April 9, 1847. He served with the army in Mexico from May to September 1847, participating in battles in Pasde Ovejas, National Bridge, and

Chepultepec, where he was severely wounded on September 12.¹⁹ Due to his wounds he was mustered out of the service on August 4, 1848.²⁰

King was appointed a Colonel of Ohio volunteers from April 17 to June 24, 1861. Due to his previous active duty service, he was also appointed a Lieutenant Colonel, Nineteenth United States Infantry, on May 12, 1861. In the summer of 1862 he was assigned to duty in Indianapolis and on August 19, 1862, he assumed command of the Sixty-Eighth Indiana Volunteer Infantry Regiment. The regiment left for Louisville, Kentucky on August 20 and then to Munfordsville, Kentucky. On September 17, at Munfordsville, a large force surrounded the post, and he was directed to surrender the post to General Buckner, who had been a prisoner of war under King in Indianapolis.

After being exchanged, King rejoined his regiment at Murfreesboro. After a leave of absence due to illness, he again returned to the regiment. Colonel King assumed command of Second Brigade on August 2, 1863.

Sixty-Eighth Indiana, Captain Harvey J. Espy

The regiment was organized in Indianapolis, Indiana, and mustered August 19, 1862. From September 14-17 the regiment was engaged at the siege of Munfordsville, Kentucky resulting in the regiment's capture. It was paroled, reorganized, and sent to Louisville, Kentucky on December 26, 1862.²¹ The regiment saw duty in Murfreesboro from January to June 1863 and was involved in action at Hoovers Gap.

Seventy-Fifth Indiana, Colonel Milton S. Robinson

The Seventy-Fifth Indiana organized at Wabash, Indiana and mustered on August 19, 1862. On August 21 the regiment was sent to Lebanon, Kentucky, and attached to the Fortieth Brigade, Twelfth Division, Army of the Ohio. The unit participated in the

pursuit of Bragg into Kentucky October 1-20 and the battle of Perryville on October 8.²² Many of the veterans also participated in various expeditions against Confederate cavalry from January to June 1863. The unit saw action at Hoovers Gap on June 24.

One Hundred First Indiana, Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Doan

The unit was organized at Wabash, Indiana and mustered on September 7, 1862. It was sent to Louisville and participated in the pursuit of Bragg October 1-20. The regiment did not see action at Perryville and was instead assigned to escort division trains to Springfield, Kentucky. It participated in the pursuit of Morgan from December 1862-January 1863 and then remained in Murfreesboro. The unit saw some action in expeditions against Confederate cavalry from January to June 1863.²³

One Hundred Fifth Ohio, Major George T. Perkins

The regiment was mustered at Camp Taylor near Cleveland, Ohio on August 21, 1862, and consisted of members from Lake, Ashtabula, Geauga, Trumbull, and Mahoning counties. It left for Covington, Kentucky on August 22 and arrived in Lexington, Kentucky, on August 25.²⁴ The unit was assigned to a brigade commanded by Colonel Charles Anderson and marched for Richmond, Kentucky to reinforce Major General William Nelson on August 30. The regiment missed the engagement and fell back to Lexington and then to Louisville.

The regiment saw its first combat action at Perryville on October 8 and sustained two hundred and sixty-five casualties (forty-nine killed and two hundred and sixteen wounded), a casualty rate of over 33 percent. After the battle, the regiment left for Tennessee and participated in the pursuit of the rebel cavalry leader Morgan from December 1862 to January 1863. The regiment remained in Murfreesboro until June, and

fought an engagement with Morgan at Milton, Tennessee on 20 March. On June 24, the regiment participated in the Tullahoma campaign and then encamped at University Mountain.

Nineteenth Indiana Battery, Captain Samuel J. Harris

The unit was organized at Indianapolis and mustered on August 5, 1862, with Samuel J. Harris as captain. During action at the Battle of Perryville on October 8 the unit suffered eighteen casualties.²⁵

An experienced commander led the Second Brigade, but the majority of the regiment had not seen significant action. Although not a formally trained military officer, Colonel King had served with distinction in Mexico. He was forty-nine years old at Chickamauga, an elderly brigade commander -- older than his division commander. The majority of the brigade was inexperienced and had not been tested in battle, having primarily seen duty in Confederate cavalry pursuit and rear security. One unit, the One Hundred Fifth Ohio, had been heavily engaged at Perryville and suffered enormous losses. Reynolds was familiar with the Seventy-Fifth Indiana, having been associated with them when they mustered.

The Third Brigade was organized as follows:

Third Brigade, Brigadier General John B. Turchin

Eleventh Ohio

Thirty-Sixth Ohio

Ninety-Second Ohio

Eighteenth Kentucky

Twenty-First Indiana Battery

John Basil Turchin (Ivan Vasilovitch Turchinoff) was born in the province of Don, in Russia, on January 30, 1822. He was a graduate of the cadet Imperial Military School at Saint Petersburg, class of 1841, and started his career in the artillery service.²⁶ He enlisted as a lieutenant at the military academy for officers of the general staff and was admitted to the staff service of the Imperial Guards as a sub-captain and later promoted to captain. He participated in the Hungarian War of 1848-1849 and in the Crimean War where he attained the rank of colonel. It was during the Crimean War that he served on the personal staff of the crown prince, later Czar Alexander II.²⁷ Turchin demonstrated an eye for fortifications by designing the Finnish coastal defenses.²⁸

Turchin immigrated to the United States in 1856 and settled in Chicago, obtaining employment in the engineering department of the Illinois Central Railroad, of which George B. McClellan was chief engineer. On June 22, 1861, he was commissioned a colonel in the Nineteenth Illinois Infantry Regiment. Utilizing Russian methods of drill and discipline, he quickly trained his regiment. Turchin impressed many influential Chicagoans, including Joseph Medill and Charles R. Ray, part owners of the *Chicago Daily Tribune*. They each wrote letters to the Illinois Adjutant general recommending Turchin for promotion to brigadier general.

In the summer of 1862, because of incidents of pillaging and other improprieties by members of his regiment, Turchin was court-martialed by General Buell. Due to his popularity and fighting spirit, his many influential friends came to his aid; and President Lincoln commissioned him a brigadier general, and he resumed service.²⁹

On April 17, 1863, Turchin was assigned to command Second Brigade, Second Division, Fourteenth Army Corps. In May, he commanded the First Cavalry Division of

the Cavalry Corps, Army of the Cumberland under Major General David Stanley and on July 29, 1863 he was assigned command of the Third Brigade in Reynolds' division.

Eleventh Ohio, Colonel Philander P. Lane

Raised in the counties of Miami, Clinton, Hamilton, Montgomery, and Columbia, the Eleventh Ohio was mustered into service for three months at Camp Dennison, Ohio, in April 1861.³⁰ The regiment was reorganized and mustered for three years service in June 1861 and ordered to the Kanawha Valley, western Virginia. The regiment spent the next year in western Virginia, primarily on guard duty.

On August 27, 1862, the regiment went to Manassas Junction and participated in the Battle of the Second Bull Run. In September 1862, the regiment proceeded into Maryland and fought as part of Crook's brigade at Antietam on September 17. After the battle, the regiment proceeded back to western Virginia, remaining there until January 1863.

The regiment embarked to Nashville and then on to Carthage Tennessee, arriving on February 22. The unit saw action at Hoover's Gap during the Tullahoma campaign.

Thirty-Sixth Ohio, Lieutenant Colonel Hiram F. Devol

The regiment was organized at Marietta, Ohio, in August 1861, and Captain George Crook of the Fourth U. S. Infantry was assigned as Colonel.³¹ It spent most of 1861-1862 in western Virginia and saw action at Antietam in September 1862. After returning to western Virginia, the regiment was sent to Tennessee in February 1863 and saw action at Hoovers Gap in June 1863.

Ninety-Second Ohio, Colonel D. B. Fearing

The Ninety-Second Ohio was organized at Marietta, Ohio, during August-September 1862. From October to December 1862 the regiment took part in expeditions in Western Virginia.³² In January 1863 the regiment proceeded to Tennessee by steamer to join the Army of the Cumberland. From April to May, ninety-six members of the regiment died from disease. In action at Hoover's Gap, regimental casualties included one killed and a few wounded.

Eighteenth Kentucky, Lieutenant Colonel Hubbard K. Milward

The Eighteenth Kentucky Regiment was recruited during the winter of 1861-1862 and mustered into service on February 8, 1862. From February to August, the regiment was on duty guarding the Covington and Lexington Railroad. In June 1862, the regiment lost 2 killed in the defense of Cynthianna, Kentucky against General Morgan.³³

On August 20, 1862, the regiment participated in the battle of Richmond, Kentucky, losing fifty-two killed one hundred and fifteen wounded and almost the entire remainder of the regiment captured. Later, the captured soldiers were paroled. During the rest of 1862 and through March of 1863, the regiment reorganized and proceeded to Murfreesboro to join the Army of the Cumberland. Casualties at Hoover's Gap included two killed and three wounded.

Twenty-First Indiana Battery, Captain William W. Andrew

The battery was organized at Indianapolis and mustered in September 9, 1862. The unit was attached to the Army of Kentucky in October 1862, and went with Crook's Brigade to the Army of the Cumberland in February 1863.³⁴

The Third Brigade was the most experienced unit in the division. Most of the brigade had mustered in 1861 and at least half had seen significant action in western Virginia, Manassas, Antietam or Richmond, Kentucky. The brigade was also engaged at Hoover's Gap in June 1863. Turchin was formally schooled in European warfare and had seen battle on the European continent. He was a disciplinarian and strongly believed in drill and training. On the other hand, although President Lincoln had reinstated him, the actions of his regiment leading to his court martial and dismissal exhibited a lack of judgement and poor leadership. Like Reynolds, he was a product of formal military training, but his past performance may have given Reynolds concern.

The elements of the Fourth Division, as was typical, varied in experience on the eve of Chickamauga. The latest version of the division had not fought together as a unit, and there were numerous changes in organization, unit structure and leadership in the weeks and months leading up to the battle. There was virtually no battle experience as a cohesive unit. Two of the three brigade commanders were new, and all came with a mixture of experience, formal schooling and culture. Having been in command for eight months, Reynolds was certainly familiar with the strengths and weaknesses of the various regiments. There appeared to be very little drill and training during the six weeks between Tullahoma and the movement towards Chattanooga, the time being spent on refit and reorganization. Wilder was, in fact, sick and away from his brigade during a majority of this time period.³⁵ This large disparity in experience and lack of cohesiveness would have to be overcome by expert leadership, and perhaps more than usual direct guidance by the division commander. The ultimate test would occur in the upcoming battle.

In August 1863, the Army of the Cumberland was once again on the move. Rosecrans transmitted a detailed movement order to his army, and after six weeks in camp, the Army of the Cumberland moved on August 16.³⁶ Reynolds' division was directed to proceed towards Jasper and he started with King's brigade in the lead. Under special instructions issued from army headquarters, Wilder's brigade was directed to make a demonstration on Chattanooga and Harrison's Landing.³⁷ Brigadier General John Brannan and his division were ordered by Thomas to report to Reynolds for the movement towards the Tennessee River.³⁸

Once the division arrived in the vicinity of the Tennessee River, there was a waiting period as Rosecrans decided where to cross his army. Wilder's brigade continued to operate independently, with Reynolds providing rations as needed. The Fourth Division arrived in Jasper on August 21, with Wilder having arrived opposite Chattanooga the previous day. By 10:30 A.M. on August 22, Wilder's brigade was harassing Chattanooga, firing shells into the city and along the river.³⁹ Wilder reported the sinking of one steamboat and disabling of another, and then withdrew his forces out of the range of the enemy guns.⁴⁰ Confusion reigned among the Confederate troops in the city, although a Confederate battery was able to range Wilder's forces. Corporal Abram McCorkle of Lilly's battery was killed in the engagement, the first Union casualty of the Chickamauga campaign.⁴¹

Eventually, each division was left to its own devices in getting across the Tennessee River, and Reynolds' division fared well. On August 22, a raiding party from King's brigade crossed the river and seized Shellmound, obtaining a ferry, one flatboat and three skiffs.⁴² For the next week, Reynolds remained in the vicinity of Shellmound,

conducting patrols on the south side of the river and adding to his fleet of flatboats.

Wilder continued to shell Chattanooga and Harrison's landing, receiving a few shots in reply. By August 29, Reynolds had seven flatboats in his possession and was prepared to cross the river at a rate of four hundred men per hour. King's brigade had essentially crossed by August 31, and Reynolds' entire division was across by September 1. By September 4, the entire army had crossed, and it prepared for the final move towards Chattanooga.⁴³

Once across the Tennessee River, the Army of the Cumberland needed to cross two parallel mountain ranges, running northeast to southwest, to cut off Chattanooga and Bragg's army. Both mountain ranges were actually long, continuous ridges with gaps. The first mountain, only a short distance from the river, was called Raccoon Mountain at its northern end and Sand Mountain to the southwest. The second barrier was the Lookout Mountain range. There were only three usable gaps in the Lookout Mountain range, and Rosecrans planned to send a corps through each gap. The first gap was at the north end of the Tennessee River, and it was through this gap the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad ran along the Tennessee River into Chattanooga. The next gap to the southwest was Stevens Gap, about twenty-six miles south of Chattanooga, near Trenton, Georgia. The third gap was Winston's Gap, forty-two miles south of Chattanooga.

Rosecrans detailed explicit orders to maneuver his army through the gaps.⁴⁴ Crittenden's corps was to move toward Chattanooga by way of the northern gap and threaten the town. Thomas's and McCook's corps would march south against Bragg's left flank. Thomas would move through Stevens Gap into McLemore's Cove and

McCook was to move farther south through and pass through Winston's Gap. Such a large dispersion of forces in the vicinity of the Confederate army was a major error in judgement by Rosecrans.

After crossing at Shellmound, Reynolds, with his two brigades, marched over Sand Mountain, arriving in Trenton on September 7. He remained at Trenton until September 10, when he was ordered to support the left flank of Brigadier General Absalom Baird on Lookout Mountain. Reynolds reached the top of Lookout Mountain on September 11, and then moved to Cooper's Gap. King's brigade was dispatched to support Negley.

Meanwhile, Bragg's army had departed Chattanooga on September 8-9 and by September 12 had moved to Lafayette, Georgia. Rosecrans, in his zeal to deal a blow to what he believed was a retreating army, ordered Negley's division into Dug Gap. A superior Confederate force nearly destroyed the division on September 10, and Rosecrans began to concentrate his army behind Steven's Gap. On September 13, King's brigade was relieved and returned to Reynolds' division, stationed on the road from Cooper's Gap to Catlett's Gap. On September 14 Reynolds moved to Pond Spring, near Chickamauga Creek, where Wilder's brigade joined it later in the day. Turchin's brigade occupied Catlett's Gap until the evening and then was replaced by King's Brigade and placed in reserve. Wilder's brigade was again detached from the division and sent down to Chickamauga Creek to guard Alexander's Bridge, three miles below Lee and Gordon's Mill.

Rosecrans' inability to determine the Confederate army's movements proved to be fatal. He thoroughly believed that Bragg was retreating into Georgia when he thrust

Negley's division towards Dug Gap. Only after nearly losing this division did he realize that Bragg was not retreating, but concentrating his army near Lafayette. Rosecrans realized he would have to consolidate his army to adapt to the situation. He would spend the next nine days, including the two days at Chickamauga, preoccupied with shifting his corps' positions.

Bragg had missed opportunities to take advantage of Rosecrans' dispersed army and was determined to make an attack. He planned to maneuver his army into position between the Union army and Chattanooga and move toward the Union left at Lee and Gordon's Mill. Rosecrans placed Wilder at Alexander's Bridge, and Colonel Robert Minty's cavalry was directed to Reed's Bridge to the north.⁴⁵ Early on September 18, Bushrod Johnson's division and Forrest's cavalry advanced toward Reed's Bridge and Confederate units were also observed moving toward Dyer's Bridge one and one-fourth miles north of Reed's Bridge. A detachment of Wilder's brigade, consisting of the Seventy-Second Indiana, the One Hundred Twenty-Third Illinois and a section of Lilly's battery, under Lieutenant Colonel Abram Miller, was sent north to guard the bridge. At 2:00 P. M., Johnson pushed Minty from Reed's Bridge, and at 3:30 P. M., Minty called in Miller's force and retired upstream to Lee and Gordon's Mill.⁴⁶

Wilder was detached and thus Reynolds was not involved in the engagement of September 18. Wilder's brigade made a determined stand before being forced to retire further west. Walker had arrived at Alexander's Bridge with Gist and Liddell's Divisions, and Walthall's Brigade of Liddell's Division charged the bridge at noon and then again at 2:30 P.M., but both attacks were repelled. Liddell moved downstream to Byram's Ford, about midway between Alexander's Bridge and Reed's Bridge, and began

to cross at 3:30 P.M. With his left flank threatened by Liddell, Wilder continued to hold the bridge until 5:00 P.M., then withdrew, ultimately taking a position one-half mile east of the Lafayette road where Minty and Miller soon joined him. Two regiments from Brigadier General Horatio Van Cleve's division of the Twenty-First Corps also joined, and this force held Johnson in check until the morning of September 19 despite a determined evening attack.⁴⁷

Rosecrans continued to be concerned over his army's disposition. By the afternoon of September 18, he began to worry about the Confederate movement down Chickamauga Creek and decided to shift troops to the Union left to protect the line of communication with Chattanooga.⁴⁸ Rosecrans ordered Thomas to move the Fourteenth Corps northward from the vicinity of Pond Spring and form on the left of Crittenden's Twenty-First Corps.⁴⁹ Negley's division led the way, and at Crawfish Springs they turned eastward to Glass Mill on Chickamauga Creek. They arrived at daybreak on September 19 and relieved Major General John Palmer's division, who then took position to the left of Van Cleve's division. Palmer then relieved Minty and Wilder's brigades which withdrew west of Lafayette road behind Viniard's house. Baird's division followed, taking position in Kelly field, and deployed along the Lafayette road, facing east. Brannan's division followed Baird to the Kelly field, passed behind Baird, and positioned itself near McDonald's house. The Fourth Division brought up the rear of Fourteenth Corps, departing Pond Spring at 4 P.M. on September 18, and initially were ordered to take a position northeast of the Widow Glenn house.⁵⁰ The division proceeded up the Dry Valley road with Turchin's brigade in the lead and King's brigade in the rear.

The forced march on the eve of a major battle was well remembered by the members of the various regiments. Albion Tourgee of the One Hundred Fifth Ohio remembered it as "a weird march over rough woods roads. A cold wind blew from the north...there were frequent halts. The firelight shone on the rubber ponchos the men wore to shield them from the cold."⁵¹ The division march covered a distance of ten miles, from Pond Spring to Brock field, and it fatigued the participants. It was no doubt necessary, in order to ensure the army was in position to prevent Rosecrans from being cutoff from Chattanooga. But at dawn, the various units found themselves on unfamiliar terrain, without prepared defensive positions, and in the face of a formidable opponent.

Despite the opportunity to destroy the Army of the Cumberland, Bragg's ineptitude allowed Rosecrans to concentrate his forces along Chickamauga Creek. The terrain was certainly not conducive to a set-piece battle, but this would not be another Tullahoma. Bragg was on the offensive and Rosecrans was defending on poor terrain. Although Bragg had been maneuvered into southeast Tennessee, he was determined to fight, and his army was ready. Reinforcements in the form of Longstreet's Corps were to arrive, and for the first time since Stones River there was a feeling of confidence in Bragg's army. On the Union side, after months of inactivity and prodding, the opportunity for a decisive victory had arrived. On the heels of Vicksburg and Gettysburg, victory in Tennessee could significantly diminish Confederate hopes and clear a path to the Deep South. Disaster waited, however, and it would be another year before Union forces would push another seventy miles to Atlanta.

Perhaps due to his previous performance at Tullahoma, and his early war reputation, Reynolds was entrusted with overseeing Brannan's efforts. For Reynolds and

the division, the five-week march to the battlefield went well, but was uneventful. The division was not engaged and was never threatened during this time period. Despite the added burden of managing Brannan's division, Reynolds skillfully maneuvered his division prior to the battle. In any case, Reynolds' relationship with Brannan was to have an impact during events at Chickamauga on September 20.

¹O.R., pt. 3, 838.

²William F. Landrus, "Senior Leadership: A Historical Perspective" (Study Project, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA, 1991), 35-36.

³Ibid.

⁴Hubert M. Jordan, "The Lightning Brigade Saves the Day," *America's Civil War*, 22 June 1997, 7.

⁵Ibid., 1.

⁶W. H. H. Benefiel, *History of Wilder's Lightning Brigade During the Civil War 1861 to 1865, Its Organization, Mounting and Arming with the Famous Spencer Repeating Rifle, Its Marches, Skirmishes and Battles engaged, a biographical sketch of its Commanders, etc.* (Pendleton, IN: W. H. H. Benefiel, 1913), 4.

⁷Frederick H. Dyer, *A Compendium of the War of the Rebellion*, Part II (Des Moines, IA: F.H. Dyer, 1908), 1125.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Dyer, *A Compendium*, 1145.

¹¹*Annual Report of the Illinois Adjutant General of the State of Illinois* (Springfield, IL: Baker and Phillips, 1863), 358.

¹²Ibid., 515.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Ibid., 416.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶Dyer, *A Compendium*, 1116.

¹⁷H. Jordan to John T. Wilder, 1 August 1863, John T. Wilder Papers, Indiana State University, Indianapolis, IN.

¹⁸Letter to W. L. Macy, Secretary of War, undated, United States Military Academy Library, U. S. Military Academy Cadet Application Papers.

¹⁹Edwin W. High, *History of the 68th Regiment Indiana Volunteer Infantry, 1862-1865*, Sixty-Eighth Indiana Infantry Association (E. High, 1902), 280.

²⁰Francis B. Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army from its organization, September 29, 1879, to March 2, 1903* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1903), 599.

²¹High, *History of the Sixty-eighth Regiment*, 2.

²²Dyer, *A Compendium*, 1146.

²³Ibid., 1153.

²⁴Ibid., 1152.

²⁵George Hazzard, *Hazzard's History of Henry County, Indiana, 1822-1906* (New Castle, IN.: George Hazzard, 1906), 176.

²⁶Mark M. Boatner III, *The Civil War Dictionary* (New York, NY: David McKay Company, Inc., 1959), 853.

²⁷Warner, *Generals in Blue*, 511.

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹T. M. Eddy, *The Patriotism of Illinois, A record of the Civil and Military History of the State in the War for the Union* (Chicago, IL: Clark and Co., 1865), 339-340.

³⁰Horton and Teverbaugh, *A History of the Eleventh Regiment Ohio Volunteer Infantry* (Dayton, OH: W. J. Shuey, Printer and Publisher, 1866), 94.

³¹Dyer, *A Compendium*, 1513.

³²*Official Roster of the Soldiers of the State of Ohio in the War of the Rebellion, 1861-1864*, vol. I (Akron, OH: The Werner Co., 1891), 156.

³³*Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Kentucky*, Vol. II (Frankfort, KY: 1867), 17.

³⁴Dyer, *A Compendium*, 1118.

³⁵*Ibid.*

³⁶*O.R.*, pt. 3, 35.

³⁷*Ibid.*, 36.

³⁸*Ibid.*, 50.

³⁹*O.R.*, pt. 3, 100.

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, 113.

⁴¹*Ibid.*, 123.

⁴²*Ibid.*, 133.

⁴³*Ibid.*, 324.

⁴⁴*Ibid.*, 323.

⁴⁵*O.R.*, pt 1, 447.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*

⁴⁷*Ibid.*

⁴⁸*Ibid.*, 55.

⁴⁹*Ibid.*

⁵⁰*Ibid.*, 440.

⁵¹Albion Tourgee, *The Story of a Thousand, Being a History of the Service of the 105th Ohio Volunteer Infantry, in the War for the Union from August 21, 1862 to June 6, 1865* (Buffalo, NY: S. McGerald and Son, 1896), 217.

CHAPTER 4

SEPTEMBER 19, 1863

Bragg had missed numerous opportunities to strike a blow at the scattered Army of the Cumberland during the week of September 12-18. As a result, Rosecrans was given the chance to concentrate his army along the Chickamauga Creek. Even so, Bragg was presented with another opportunity due to Rosecrans' shifting of his corps September 19, but he did not take advantage of this new opportunity.

Thomas temporarily seized the initiative early on the first day. The Army of the Cumberland continued shifting forces throughout the early morning hours of September 19, in an effort to cut off Bragg from Chattanooga. Rosecrans directed the Fourteenth Corps to proceed to a position near Kelly field on the Lafayette road. Baird's First division led the column, reaching Kelly field near daylight. Brannan's Third division followed, and was placed in position on Baird's left. Major General Palmer's Second division, Twenty-First Corps, continued down Lafayette road to take position on the right of Baird. Rosecrans' concern with the strength of the Union left led to the cross attachment of various divisions to Thomas from the other two Union Corps.

At 7:00 A.M., Colonel Daniel McCook, commander of the Second brigade of the Second Division of Major General Gordon Granger's Reserve Corps, informed Thomas that a single, unsupported Confederate brigade was on the west side of Chickamauga Creek near Alexander's Bridge. McCook's brigade had been stationed at the intersection of Reed's Bridge and Jay's Mill roads. In the hopes of easily capturing an enemy brigade, Thomas directed Brannan to capture or drive the brigade back across the creek.¹ Brannan ordered Colonel John Croxton's Second brigade to proceed towards Reed's Bridge and

his other two brigades advanced in support. After a sharp engagement, Brannan realized he was up against a superior force and asked Thomas for reinforcements. In fact, Brannan had run into two divisions under Major General William T. Walker. Thomas directed Baird to assist, and the fight was on.

After their long night march, Reynolds and his division had stopped at Osborne house, just north of Crawfish Springs, for breakfast. The occasional boom of cannon and irregular discharge of musketry could be heard to the north. The impending battle made it a trying respite, and barely had the fires begun for coffee before the order to move out was given.²

The rest of the Fourteenth Corps was fairly well spread out along the Dry Valley road to the south, and Confederate pressure on the Union left continued to increase. Thomas directed Reynolds to proceed to a position northeast of the Widow Glenn house. As Reynolds and his division moved north, Thomas began to call for additional reinforcements. Brigadier General Richard Johnson's Second division, of the Twenty-First Corps, took position on Baird's right, arriving just in time to counter a renewed attack by Walker. At 8 A.M., Palmer dispatched Colonel William Grose's Second brigade to Thomas, although Grose was not positioned by Thomas, and actually returned to Palmer. By noon, Palmer's division was positioned on Johnson's right. At 1 P.M., Crittenden, with Rosecrans' approval, directed Brigadier General Horatio Van Cleve to send two brigades from his Third Division, Twenty-First Corps, to assist Palmer.³ By this time, there were gaps in the Union line as units sped northward. However, Thomas' aggressiveness kept Bragg pre-occupied and unable to determine the vulnerability of the

Union army. Reynolds' division was still proceeding north toward Kelly field, although fast moving events would soon change his intended position.

Turchin's Third Brigade preceded King's Second Brigade as Reynolds' division arrived northeast of the Widow Glenn house around noon. At the same time, Reynolds directed the Ninety-Second Illinois, which had earlier that morning been directed to support Wilder, to Reynolds' headquarters.⁴ Thomas directed Reynolds' division to proceed toward the McDonald house, and Turchin's brigade, in the lead, proceeded past the Dyer house and towards Kelly field. Thomas then verbally directed Reynolds to position the Third brigade southeast of Brotherton road.⁵ Confusion began to reign as the effort to hold the Union left continued. Reynolds, without consulting Turchin, directed the Eighteenth Kentucky and Ninety-Second Ohio (near the Kelly house) to the position delineated by Thomas.⁶ While approaching the McDonald house, Turchin was informed by his assistant adjutant general, Captain William B. Curtis, of the change, and reversed the march of the Eleventh Ohio and Thirty-Sixth Ohio to rejoin his other two regiments.

The situation was changing rapidly. At noon, King's brigade was at the Dyer House and was ordered to take position on Turchin's right. King put his brigade in motion with the Sixty-Eighth Indiana Regiment in the lead. As the brigade started out, Captain Charles Bryant, of Company E, Sixty-Eighth Indiana, was struck in the leg by a spent ball.⁷ Reynolds proceeded along with King's brigade to join Turchin. Marching rapidly to the northeast, the brigade entered the Lafayette road north of the Brotherton house and passed the Poe house and Poe field when it was halted. At this time, Major General Benjamin Cheatham's Division of Lieutenant General Leonidas Polk's Corps was engaging Palmer's division, and Palmer asked Reynolds for assistance. As King's

brigade was about to take position on Turchin's right, Palmer rode up and informed Reynolds that his command "was nearly out of ammunition and in great need of assistance to enable him to hold what he had gained."⁸ Reynolds directed King's brigade, consisting of the Sixty-Eighth Indiana, One Hundred Fifth Ohio, and One Hundred First Indiana towards the position indicated by Palmer. Reynolds retained the Seventy-Fifth Indiana Regiment and the Ninety-Second Illinois Regiment to support his artillery. The Nineteenth Indiana Battery and four small mountain howitzers of the Eighteenth Indiana Battery were located on a slope parallel to and west of Lafayette Road, in a clearing called Brotherton field. Reynolds also ordered the Ninety-Second Illinois to support the force surrounding the batteries.

The frantic Union movements were resulting in a piecemeal disposition. By directing the Second Brigade to assist Palmer, Reynolds had effectively split the two brigades of the Fourth Division. In fact, two divisions from different corps, Van Cleve's and Palmer's, were between Reynolds' brigades. Wilder's First Brigade was positioned west of Viniard Field, and not part of Reynolds' division during the battle; therefore, from this point on, Wilder's brigade will not be discussed. In directing King's brigade to support Palmer, Reynolds surmised that "Although not the precise position indicated to me for Second Brigade, was very close to it, and appeared to be a place that was essential to fill at once, and no other troops were in sight to take the position."⁹ Also, Turchin's brigade was split without the brigade commander's knowledge due to Reynolds' hasty directions to the Eighteenth Kentucky and Ninety-Second Ohio. Unit cohesiveness was sacrificed for expediency. This fact was not lost on the soldiers. Sergeant David Floyd

of the Seventy-Fifth Indiana remarked, "It is best ordinarily for the troops of the same division and corps to fight together in battle."¹⁰

Upon directing King's brigade to assist Palmer, Reynolds returned to the vicinity of Harris' artillery battery in Brotherton field. He began consolidating a formation of artillery and soon added Captain George Swallow's Seventh Indiana Battery of Van Cleve's division, "which I found in the road unemployed."¹¹

At this point, Reynolds ceased to exercise control over his two brigades. After dispatching both King's and Turchin's brigades into line, he failed to follow their movements. Reynolds decided to utilize his services in maintaining his reserve force of artillery. Although it is unclear, it does not appear that King and Turchin's brigades were officially turned over to Palmer. Perhaps being more involved in the activities of his two brigades, which would soon be violently engaged, could have better suited Reynolds' leadership.

Due to the piecemeal brigade disposition, Turchin was not present during the initial engagement of his brigade. Shortly after 1:30 P.M., the Eighteenth Kentucky Regiment left the road, supporting the Ninety-Second Ohio Regiment, as it proceeded into the woods to the east. After advancing three hundred to four hundred yards, the regiment formed in line on the left of the Ninety-Second Ohio. The Eighteenth Kentucky relieved the Ninth Indiana Regiment and the Ninety-Second Ohio relieved the One Hundred Twenty-Fourth Ohio of Brigadier General William Hazen's Second Brigade of Palmer's division. Turchin's brigade eventually replaced Hazen's brigade, which had been heavily engaged, and needed to replenish ammunition. Turchin's two regiments were "immediately exposed to heavy and well-directed fire from the enemy which was

warmly returned.”¹² It was during this engagement that the Ninety-Second Ohio’s regimental commander, Colonel Fearing, was wounded and carried from the field. Lieutenant Colonel Douglas Putnam Jr. assumed command.

Turchin and his remaining two regiments arrived in position shortly after 3 P.M. Initially, he directed the Eleventh Ohio Regiment and Thirty-Sixth Ohio Regiment in line behind the Eighteenth Kentucky and Ninety-Second Ohio. The Eleventh Ohio soon moved into a position to support the Ninety-Second Ohio, still under fire. The sound of battle to the front of the regiment was tremendous, and a large number of wounded were being carried back to the rear. Hazen, of Palmer’s division, appealed to the regimental commander, Colonel Philander Lane, to assume the position of one of his regiments that was nearly out of ammunition. Lane replied that he was awaiting orders from Turchin, and Hazen went to locate Turchin.¹³ Lane assumed the position when the Eleventh Ohio fell back, just as Turchin arrived on the scene. The Thirty-Sixth Ohio soon took up position on the left. The Eighteenth Kentucky and Ninety-Second Ohio assumed a reserve position behind the two forward regiments. A brisk fire on the front and right flank prompted Lane to make a charge, capturing a number of prisoners.¹⁴ After holding the ground for half an hour, Lane and his regiment fell back and assumed their position to the right of the Thirty-Sixth Ohio.

At 3:30 P.M., Turchin completed the relief of Hazen’s brigade. On his left was Brigadier General August Willich’s First Brigade of Brigadier General Richard Johnson’s Second Division, Twentieth Corps. On his right was Brigadier General Charles Cruft’s First Brigade of Palmer’s division. There were many Union division commanders on the field, but seemingly few with their division. Brigades, and even regiments, were engaged

with little guidance from the chain of command. Turchin moved to the right and formed his brigade in two lines on Cruft's left.

Reynolds had essentially given his division away, and seemed unusually disinterested during the initial hours after arriving on the battlefield. During the engagement by Turchin's brigade, he remained in the vicinity of the artillery arrayed along the ridge on Brotherton field. He was first made aware of his division's status was when Thomas remarked that Turchin's first two regiments to see battle had "been badly chewed up."¹⁵ Reynolds's brigade commanders must have perceived a distinct lack of support. In his memoirs, Turchin remarked:

This action of separating his own small division in two parts, and placing those parts on the opposite ends of another division, not even belonging to his own corps; removing them from his own control; and leaving them without anyone to direct their movements, while he remained in the rear and trying to organize something out of nothing, does not look like generalship.¹⁶

Turchin's comments, although extremely blunt and harsh, have an element of truth. Although the position assigned to Turchin was directed by Thomas, Reynolds alone made the decision ordering King to assist Palmer. He therefore directly contributed to the disparate division position. Also, after ordering his brigades into line, he should have more formally directed control of those units. As he did not formally give up command of the units, we must assume he had responsibility for their performance, and should have exercised more control.

At 2:30 P.M., unity of command continued to deteriorate in the Union center. Although requested by Palmer, and ordered into line by Reynolds, King's three regiments actually assumed a position to the right of Van Cleve's division; Colonel George Dick's Second Brigade and Brigadier General Samuel Beatty's First Brigade. This positioning

was largely undertaken by King in an attempt to find a location for his brigade on the right flank of Van Cleve.¹⁷ Palmer's request for assistance was perhaps premature, as things were quiet along his front. Little guidance was provided to King and Union division commanders, including Reynolds, seemed to have a poor vision of the battlefield, especially friendly positions.

There was a feeling of confusion on the part of King's men, even prior to the engagement. The officers seemed to be grasping for a direction to front the brigade.¹⁸ The terrain was thickly wooded, and it was very difficult to keep a proper alignment. The thickets made communications difficult, and even companies lost direction. King's brigade was arrayed as follows, left to right facing east: the Sixty-Eighth Indiana, the One Hundred First Indiana and the One Hundred Fifth Ohio. As a result of the haphazard positioning, a gap of two hundred yards existed between King's left and Dick's right. There was also a gap on King's right of six hundred yards to Colonel Hans Heg's Third Brigade of Brigadier General Jefferson Davis's First Division of the Twentieth Corps.

As with Turchin, King's brigade was isolated from its division commander and there was a lack of effective command and control. The Second Brigade was fighting a defensive battle, on poor terrain, with a complete lack of knowledge of the location or identity of units on the flanks. Reynolds was unaware of the status or locations of either brigade as the afternoon progressed, which was unusual even in the confusion of the first day at Chickamauga. Certainly during this time, Reynolds, as division commander, should have ascertained the status of his brigades.

Major General Alexander Stewart's division, along King's front, conducted the next Confederate attack. At approximately 3:30 P.M., a line of skirmishers from

Brigadier General John C. Brown's Brigade of Stewart's Division advanced toward the front of the Sixty-Eighth Indiana. The regiment was driven back by well-directed fire and the Second Brigade shifted right and faced towards the northeast. A large gap still existed between King's One Hundred Fifth Ohio and Heg. Unable to see the Union troops through the dense underbrush, the Twenty-Sixth Tennessee regiment of Brown's Brigade continued to the northwest. At two hundred yards the Sixty-Eighth Indiana poured a murderous volley into their left flank. When the smoke cleared, the Confederates were gone, and King shifted his brigade from northeast to east.¹⁹ At the same time, the Nineteenth Indiana Artillery fired spherical case over the heads of Dick's and Beatty's brigades to the left.²⁰

Lack of support on either flank proved to be King's undoing. After a short lull, large numbers of Brown's Brigade appeared on King's left. King ordered the Sixty-Eighth Indiana to hold its fire until he gave the order. At fifty yards, King gave the order to fire, and heavy fighting continued for the next twenty minutes. On King's right, the Third and Forty-First Tennessee Confederate regiments of Brigadier General John Gregg's brigade from Brigadier General Bushrod Johnson's division pushed the One Hundred Fifth Ohio back, effectively collapsing the flank. His brigade in danger of being overrun and captured, King ordered a withdrawal back across the Lafayette road into Brotherton field. Confusion reigned as King tried to rally his command. Retreating units of Dick and Beatty's brigades added to the confusion. During this time, an unknown officer attempted to give orders to the brigade, which drew a swift recrimination from King. He drew his sword in a threatening manner and the officer quickly retreated.²¹

During King's engagement, Reynolds maintained his position among the artillery, with the Seventy-Fifth Indiana of King's brigade, and the Ninety-Second Illinois of Wilder's brigade, as battery protection. The Ninety-Second Illinois had previously dismounted and hitched their horses to some trees for this purpose. The Sixth Ohio from Grose's brigade soon arrived in the vicinity of the batteries to resupply their ammunition, and Reynolds directed it to assist in protecting the artillery. Palmer soon called for the Seventy-Fifth Indiana, and Reynolds released it, using the Sixth Ohio as support for the batteries. As his brigade collapsed, King sent his adjutant, Captain Francis Wilkinson, to Reynolds, requesting Reynolds send the Seventy-Fifth Indiana to assist.²² Due to dispatching this regiment to assist Palmer, Reynolds was unable to comply, and after some hesitation, he directed the Ninety-Second Illinois to proceed toward King. Colonel Smith D. Atkins, the regimental commander, started moving his regiment south along the Lafayette road, in the direction of King's position. Captain Wilkinson led the regiment down Lafayette road, and soon men from King's brigade began running out of the forest to the north. Wilkinson rode off to find King, and bullets began hitting Atkins' left flank. Atkins directed his regiment to the right and was then ordered off the road by an unknown mounted officer. The regiment fell back to its original position on the hill to the right of the batteries, and began to return fire on the pressing Confederates. Order was soon restored, although the confusion was so great Atkins feared that he was firing into remnants of King's routed brigade.²³

A lack of proper command and control of the batteries on Brotherton ridge was about to cause problems. Shortly after King's brigade broke, Dick and Beatty's brigades also faltered. As Beatty's brigade retreated, fire from Harris' battery killed and wounded

a number of men in the Nineteenth Ohio Regiment, causing the unit to become scattered. Beatty stated that "upon being informed that he was firing upon our own men, the commanding officer [Harris] reported that he was ordered to do so."²⁴ It is unclear who ordered Harris to fire the batteries resulting in Union casualties. One can surmise that the order came from Reynolds, who was the senior officer in the vicinity of the batteries. Perhaps the excitement of the collapsing center was leading to poor decisions, but generalship in the Union center was sorely lacking.

With success against King and Van Cleve, Brown's Brigade began to press against Palmer's division. The Seventy-Fifth Indiana was to acquit itself well in its first action of the war. As Van Cleve's division was collapsing to his right, Palmer recognized the need to take quick action. Palmer directed the regiment to attack the right flank of Brown's brigade. The effect was devastating and Brown's advance was effectively checked. Again, the Seventy-Fifth Indiana was a regiment operating independent of its brigade as well as its division. Its success was due to the performance of the regiment's officers and men and not any guidance or assistance from above. After the engagement, the Seventy-Fifth Indiana formed on the right of Grose's brigade.

Turchin's Third Brigade performed admirably during the late afternoon fighting in Brock field. He maintained his position to the left of Cruft, with the Eleventh Ohio and Thirty-Sixth Ohio forward and the Eighteenth Kentucky and Ninety-Second Ohio in reserve. The Thirty-Sixth Ohio was to the left of the Eleventh Ohio, facing southeast. Shortly after 4:00 P.M., Colonel James Sheffield's brigade of Major General John Hood's division attacked Cruft, causing the brigade to break and run, leaving Turchin's right flank unsupported. Turchin's brigade changed its front to the right, in the direction of the

heavy firing. Cruft's retreating troops ran into the brigade, creating confusion. The heavy woods made it difficult to confront the Confederate forces, and the Thirty-Sixth Ohio was taken under heavy fire. The regimental commander Colonel William Jones was killed during this engagement. The regiment was suffering under the intense volleys, and Lieutenant Colonel Hiram Devol sought out Jones to address the situation. Unable to find him, Devol returned to his position. Still seeing the destruction, he again sought out Jones, but unable to find him, he ordered a charge.²⁵ The Eleventh Ohio and Ninety-Second Ohio joined in, and Sheffield's brigade fell back over a quarter of a mile. Turchin soon ordered the brigade back and reformed his lines.

During the time of Turchin's engagement, Reynolds remained in the vicinity of the artillery in Brotherton field. The regiments of Turchin's brigade operated independently during this phase of the battle. The order to charge was not given by Turchin, whose exact whereabouts are unknown. Regimental commanders and troops were determining success of the desperate struggle on the Union left and center. Despite the lack of generalship, the Union line continued to hold.

The most serious threat to the integrity of the Federal position occurred in the vicinity of Reynolds' position in Brotherton field. As Reynolds stood by the batteries, Dick and Beatty attempted to reform their brigades that had been thrown back by Brown. King's brigade was still six hundred yards southwest of Brotherton house, out of effective supporting range. Lieutenant Harry Cushing of the Fourth United States Battery H, of Palmer's division, reported to Reynolds, bringing the total number of guns on the ridge to twenty.²⁶ Shortly thereafter, Brigadier General William Bate's brigade from Stewart's division was ordered forward, aimed directly at the confused Union center.

During this time, Reynolds had no control over any of the units of his division. Turchin's brigade was still positioned to the left of Cruft northeast of Brotherton field. King's brigade had not fully recovered from the attack by Gregg, and was milling about over five hundred yards to the southwest of Brotherton field. The Seventy-Fifth Indiana was still to the right of Grose after driving back Brown and the Ninety-Second Illinois was operating independently after the belated attempt to assist King. Harris' battery was located on the southern edge of Brotherton field. Reynolds remained in the vicinity of the batteries along with elements of Dick and Beatty's brigades. With his training as an artilleryman, perhaps he felt most comfortable among the mass of cannon. Given the confusion on this portion of the battlefield, Reynolds should have been making an effort to rally the dispersed Union troops, especially King's.

The Seventy-Fifth Indiana was tested for the second time and again the inexperienced regiment fought with valor. Bate's brigade launched a ferocious attack into Grose's brigade. Russell's battery responded with cannister, but the pressure by Bate eventually caused Grose to collapse, placing the Seventy-Fifth Indiana's left flank in peril. Realizing it was in danger of being flanked; the regiment broke and retreated across the Lafayette road. The fighting had been particularly brutal. As David Floyd wrote, "Every moment had its peculiar sound of terror--every spot its ghastly sight of destruction and horror."²⁷

By 4:00 P.M., Reynolds' span of control began to narrow even further. He remained in the vicinity of Harris' battery on the southern edge of Brotherton field, and his role in reversing Bate's attack was limited. He seemed content to let Van Cleve attempt to rally the brigades of Beatty and Dick, although Van Cleve was having very

little success. The timely arrival of Hazen's brigade alleviated the tenuous situation in northern Brotherton field. Hazen recalls, "I found myself the only general officer upon that part of the field, and to check the farther advance of the enemy was of utmost importance. I hastily gathered and placed in position all the artillery then in reach."²⁸ Elements of the scattered Seventy-Fifth Indiana were used to support the gun line arrayed in Poe Field by Hazen. The batteries, directed by Hazen, eventually forced Bate to retreat. By the time Reynolds arrived in the vicinity of the arrayed guns, the tide had turned in favor of the Union.²⁹ It is unclear exactly where Reynolds was located when Hazen arrived. He was most likely at the southern edge of Brotherton field, near Harris' battery, which was not part of the artillery arrayed by Hazen.

During this time, elements of Johnson's Brigade, under Colonel John Fulton, assaulted the southern edge of Brotherton field. Despite Reynolds' pleas, the Sixth Ohio abandoned their support position with Harris' battery and returned to the fight. The only portion of his division he controlled was the Nineteenth Indiana Battery and four guns of the Eighteenth Indiana Battery. The Ninety-Second Illinois also remained in the vicinity of Harris' battery, but operated independently. The Ninety-Second put up a good fight as the Twenty-Fifth Tennessee struck the right flank. Atkins soon realized that the Sixth Ohio had abandoned their position near the batteries and he was being overwhelmed. He ordered his regiment to fall back due to a lack of support and after hearing word that stragglers from other regiments were unhitching their mounts. Atkins met a captain on Reynolds' staff and was informed that the general had not been seen recently. Atkins believed Reynolds had been killed or wounded "for I saw him in the thickest of the fighting to rally the left of my regiment."³⁰ Atkins took his regiment and reported to

Wilder. Harris faced his guns to the right to meet the threat and while attempting to execute his orders amidst the confusion, he was struck by a spent ball, suffering a painful contusion. Harris' battery was forced to fall back due to lack of infantry support and abandoned one gun to the Confederates.³¹

Although Reynolds had little contact with his own division, he was making an attempt to reverse the swirling confusion that raged about him. As Hazen became preoccupied with organizing the gun line in Poe field, elements of his brigade were left to their own devices. The Sixth Ohio, of Hazen's brigade, which had previously disregarded their orders to guard Harris' guns, returned to their position. The fighting in this portion of the field was ferocious. Major Samuel Erwin of the Sixth Ohio described it as "hot a fire of musketry as I ever saw."³² Reynolds had a horse shot out from under him, and realizing the position was being overrun, directed the Sixth Ohio to retreat.³³ The retreating regiment formed behind a rail fence and was soon joined by the Ninth Indiana Regiment of Hazen's brigade, which Reynolds had also directed to retreat. Reynolds ordered the two regiments forward, but the Thirty-Sixth Alabama and Fifty-Eighth Alabama repulsed the effort with a murderous fire. The Union regiments fell back to the right of Hazen's arrayed batteries near Poe house.

Near 5:00 P.M., as Reynolds arrived in Poe field with the Sixth Ohio and Ninth Indiana, his division was still completely outside his control. Turchin's brigade remained to the left of Palmer's line and King's shattered brigade was assembling southwest of Brotherton field. Harris' guns had reformed west of Brotherton field and Harris turned over command to First Lieutenant Robert Lackey. Remnants of the Seventy-Fifth Indiana were located in the vicinity of the artillery that Hazen had arrayed in Poe field,

and the Ninety-Second Illinois had returned to the control of Wilder in Viniard field. As Bate's troops assaulted the position in Poe field, Hazen directed the batteries to open fire, and effectively stopped the Confederates. By the time Reynolds' presence became known to Hazen, "the fight was closed for the day."³⁴

The action taken by Rosecrans to shift his forces to the north prevented Bragg from flanking the Union left, but almost destroyed his army in the process. The wholesale shifting of divisions and brigades in the face of a numerically superior foe was certainly a gamble that almost proved disastrous for the Union army. The uncoordinated attacks by Bragg's army did more to assist the Federals than any action taken by the Union command. With the exception of Croxton's brigade conducting the initial assault, the Union army spent most of the day on their heels, and nearly toppled over.

With the exception of directing the action of his reserve regiments, and remaining with a regimental battery, Reynolds had little contact with his division during the first day at Chickamauga. The actions of Turchin's brigade were completely unknown to him. After ordering King's brigade into line as requested by Palmer, Reynolds was unaware of their exact movements. The two reserve regiments were similarly released to Palmer and eventually left Reynolds with no troops from his division. By the time Harris' battery was overrun, he was virtually a general with no command.

Reynolds' piecemeal application of his division certainly created confusion among his brigades. Turchin in particular felt unusually isolated on unfamiliar terrain with no guidance from his division commander. Unit cohesion was virtually nonexistent, leading to uncertainty and confusion among the two brigades. The result was an uncoordinated series of reactions that in King's case led to a disaster, which rendered his brigade

unusable for the rest of the day. Although Thomas directed Reynolds where to position Turchin, it was Reynolds, as requested by Palmer, who ordered King into line. Perhaps a quickly coordinated plan, retaining unit integrity, would have proven more efficient than simply directing a brigade to a position based on Palmer's unnecessary request. This may have then allowed for a more offensive posture and the ability to take the fight to the Confederates.

Reynolds' decision to remain with the batteries and reserve units may have been due to his complete unfamiliarity with the situation. He may even have realized that the piecemeal disposition of the Union army was seriously flawed, and superior firepower from massed batteries might be the key to reversing a pending debacle. Being a trained artillery officer, he probably felt more comfortable in this position. Overall, his lack of concern for his brigades was quite peculiar. In any case, his personal performance during the first day must be determined by his activity in the vicinity of the artillery. He may have directed Harris to fire the cannon that inflicted the casualties on Beatty's brigade, but we cannot be sure. On the other hand, he certainly exhibited bravery and physical courage while directing the movements of the Ninth Indiana and Sixth Ohio under a withering fire. The massed batteries, and not he personally, seemed to be a rallying point for retreating troops from Van Cleve's division, who still had the will to fight. Ultimately, his efforts the first day were not especially critical, and his talents may have been better used elsewhere.

Fighting outside of its commander's control, the Fourth Division's performance the first day was mixed. The Third Brigade exhibited resilience and determination in shoring up Palmer's left flank. It was one of the few brigades in the Union center to take

the fight to the enemy. In particular, the Thirty-Sixth Ohio was aggressive in its approach. The Second Brigade was put in an untenable situation, and the end result was a disaster. After breaking under extreme pressure, the brigade was not an effective fighting force for the remainder of the day. This seemed more due to circumstances rather than to flaws in fighting ability on the part of the brigade's soldiers.

It was a cheerless night on the battlefield, broken by the sounds of the wounded and dying. As remembered by David Floyd of the Seventy-Fifth Indiana, "The light of the moon as it shone through the trees of the forest, cast a somber shadow over the dead and dying, as they lay as thick as leaves in Vallombrosa."³⁵ To prepare for the next day, battle lines were reformed. Reynolds' division had marched all night and fought all day and exhaustion pervaded the regiments. Some began to roll rocks and logs into position to form a barricade, but most sank down and were asleep as soon as a new line was formed. There were very few axes and spades available to prepare adequate breastworks along the division position. The Sixty-Eighth Indiana made a coordinated attempt to construct breastworks, but most regiments attempted to get some rest in the shivering cold.³⁶ The slaughter would renew when the sun rose.

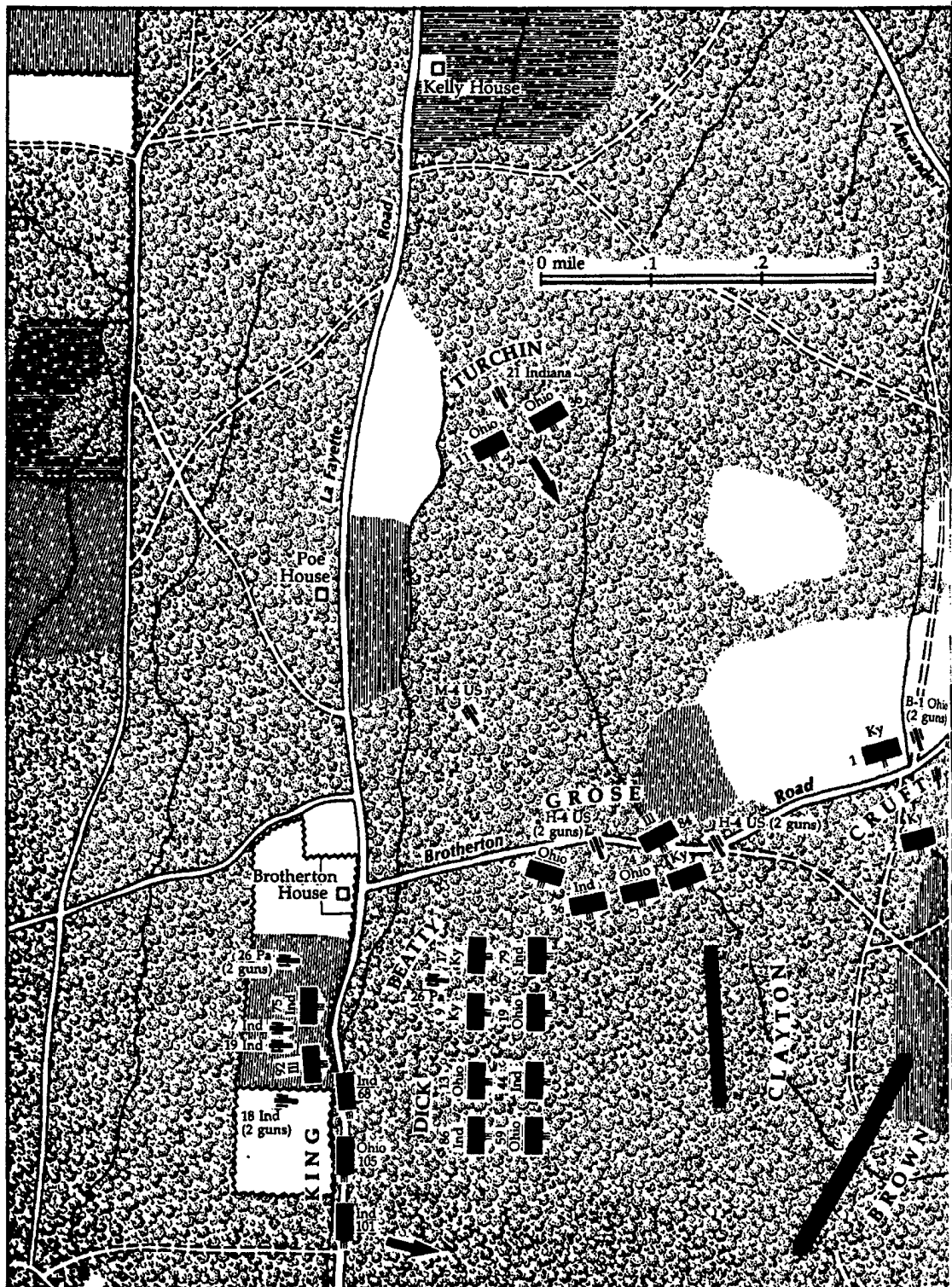


Figure 1. September 19 (Early Afternoon)

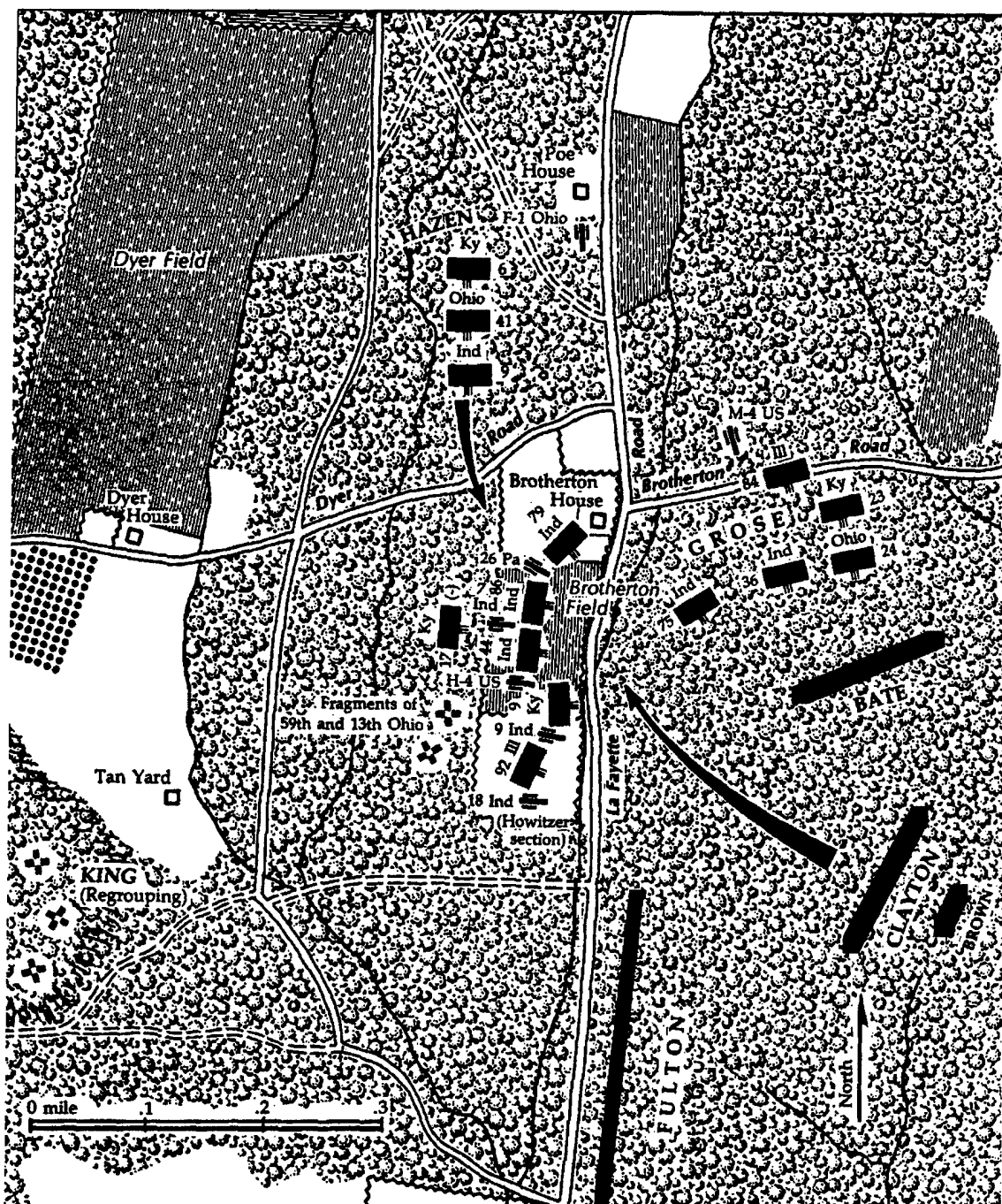


Figure 2. September 19 (Late Afternoon)

¹*O.R.*, pt. 1, 249.

²Reverend David Floyd, *History of the Seventy-Fifth Regiment of Indiana Infantry Volunteers, Organizations, Campaigns, and Battles, 1862-1865* (Philadelphia, PA: Lutheran Publication Society, 1893), 135.

³*O.R.* pt. 1, 712.

⁴*Ibid.*, 456.

⁵*Ibid.*, 440.

⁶John Turchin, *Chickamauga* (Chicago, IL: Fergus Printing Co., 1888), 75.

⁷High, *History of the Sixty-Eighth Regiment*, 64.

⁸*O.R.*, pt. 1, 440.

⁹*Ibid.*

¹⁰Floyd, *History of the Seventy-Fifth Regiment*, 137.

¹¹*O.R.*, pt. 1, 220.

¹²*Ibid.*, 477.

¹³*Ibid.*, 480.

¹⁴William Scott, *Philander P. Lane, Colonel of Volunteers in the Civil War, Eleventh Ohio Infantry* (Des Moines, IA: William Scott, 1920), 227.

¹⁵Cozzens, *This Terrible Sound*, 178.

¹⁶Turchin, *Chickamauga*, 75.

¹⁷High, *History of the Sixty-Eighth Regiment*, 64-65.

¹⁸Tourgee, *The Story of a Thousand*, 218.

¹⁹High, *History of the Sixty-Eighth Regiment*, 65.

²⁰*O.R.*, pt. 1, 471.

²¹High, *History of the Sixty-Eighth Regiment*, 67.

²²*Ibid.*, 78-79.

²³*O.R.*, pt. 1, 456.

²⁴*Ibid.*, 808.

²⁵*O.R.*, pt. 1, 481.

²⁶*Ibid.*, 799.

²⁷Floyd, *History of the Seventy-Fifth Regiment*, 145.

²⁸*O.R.*, pt. 1, 762.

²⁹*Ibid.*

³⁰*Ibid.*, 456.

³¹*Ibid.*, 471.

³²*Ibid.*, 796.

³³Ebenezer Hannaford, *The Story of a Regiment: A History of the Campaigns and Associations in the Field, of the Sixth Ohio Volunteer Infantry* (Cincinnati, OH: Ebenezer Hannaford, 1869), 464.

³⁴*O.R.*, pt. 1, 762.

³⁵Floyd, *History of the Seventy-Fifth Regiment*, 151.

³⁶High, *History of the Sixty-Eighth Regiment*, 83.

CHAPTER 5

SEPTEMBER 20, 1863

It was a long, anxious night and water was in short supply throughout the Union lines. During the heat of the day, many men had shed their coats, and had to brave an unusually cold September night. Aside from the actual fighting of the battle, the night of September 19-20, 1863, was the most vivid memory of the Union veterans.

While the Union regiments braced themselves for the next day's events, the generals thought only of defense. Rosecrans held a late night war council. He and his generals were determined to hold the Union left and prevent Bragg from reaching Chattanooga. To do this, Thomas' position on the extreme left would have to be strengthened by removing units from the Union center and right. Thomas essentially held a salient in the shape of a backward letter "C" facing east. The line ran from McDonald house on the left, then across the Lafayette road and followed the trace of the Kelly farm southward before bending back and recrossing the road near the Poe farm. The division positions, north to south, were Baird, Johnson, Palmer, Reynolds and Brannan. Rosecrans ordered Van Cleve's division and Brigadier General Thomas Wood's First Division, Twenty-First Corps, in reserve to the west, in a position to support either the left or center of the Union line.¹

Thomas' belief that the troop strength on his extreme left was insufficient to prevent a Confederate flanking movement would set in motion a series of events that ultimately led to the destruction of the Union army. At 2:00 A.M., he requested Major General James Negley's Second division of the Fourteenth Corps to shore up Baird's position on the extreme Union left.² Rosecrans approved the request, although it would

require Negley to depart his position in McCook's line to the right of Brannan, leaving a gap. McCook had insufficient troops to cover the loss, so Wood's division was assigned to fill the gap. Through a series of unclear orders and delayed movements, Negley did not start moving Brigadier General John Beatty's First brigade until 7:30 A.M., and the rest of his division until after 9 A.M. Wood's division was slow to take the new position in the line. The Union right was becoming attenuated as units shifted to the left. Like the previous day, Rosecrans was busy shifting over one-third of the army as the Confederates were poised to strike.

Reynolds positioned his division on the southern part of the "C", facing southeast. The regiments that had been too exhausted the night before, erected barricades in the morning in preparation for the renewed onslaught. The Fourth Division was in two lines, with one-half the division in reserve.³ The Third Brigade was immediately to Palmer's right; it's right just east of Lafayette road, at the northeast corner of Poe field. The brigade was aligned north to south as follows: the Thirty-Sixth Ohio, Ninety-Second Ohio and a portion of the Eleventh Ohio in the frontline and the rest of the Eleventh Ohio and the Eighteenth Kentucky in reserve. The Twenty-First Indiana Battery was placed on a ridge to the rear.⁴ The Second Brigade was to the right of Turchin's brigade, slightly refused, to occupy good ground west of Lafayette road. The brigade was arrayed north to south with the Sixty-eighth Indiana and the Seventy-Fifth Indiana in the front and the One Hundred First Indiana and the One Hundred Fifth Ohio in the second line. The Nineteenth Indiana battery was placed between the Sixty-eighth Indiana and Seventy-Fifth Indiana.⁵

There were a few changes in leadership in Reynolds' division due to injuries, but they were not significant. Lieutenant Colonel Hiram Devol assumed command of the Thirty-Sixth Ohio, and Lieutenant Robert Lackey assumed command of the Nineteenth Indiana battery. Devol in particular had proven himself worthy of command due to his performance under pressure the previous day. Lackey was undoubtedly less experienced than Harris was, but Reynolds' knowledge of artillery could minimize this deficiency. The overall defensive mission of the division also minimized the effect of less experienced commanders.

The improved comfort level due to reuniting the division in firmly established positions surely improved the division's morale. The position occupied by the Fourth Division on September 20 was much superior to the helter-skelter formation and locations of the previous day. Both brigades were a position of mutual support, and after some rest, many of the regiments constructed some sort of breastworks. Favorable terrain, a concentration of troops, and familiarity with own troop dispositions provided a feeling of confidence.

The attack on the Union left occurred at 9:30 A.M., as Federal reinforcements for Thomas continued their sidling movement to the north. Negley's entire division had not yet appeared and Beatty's brigade was driven back. Thomas, concerned with the determined Confederate attack on the Union left, searched for additional troops. With the misunderstanding that Brannan's division was in reserve, Thomas dispatched an aide to alert Brannan. Captain Kellogg of Thomas' staff directed Brannan to take his division to the north and assist the effort on the Union left. Reynolds had been aware of Brannan's orders to remain in reserve, but said nothing when Brannan appeared on his right that

morning. After the discussion with Kellogg, Brannan was concerned over leaving a gap in the line and consulted Reynolds. At the time it was quiet on his front, and Reynolds recommended that Brannan obey the order. Reynolds also informed Kellogg that Brannan's division would have to be replaced in order to secure his right flank.⁶ Kellogg reported this information to Rosecrans, and Wood's division, positioned immediately to Brannan's right, was ordered to "close up on Reynolds."⁷ Brannan never left his position on Reynolds.

Although senior to Brannan, Reynolds was not in Brannan's chain of command. During the movement from Tullahoma and Chickamauga, Brannan was directed to report to Reynolds, but that official relationship did not exist on this day. Due to the relationship developed over the previous weeks, perhaps Brannan felt he should defer to Reynolds' judgement and advice. Reynolds did make it known to Brannan that he preferred Brannan not leave his position when directed to do so by Thomas. Perhaps Reynolds did not want a repeat of the previous day, when his unprotected right flank led to the disastrous route of King's brigade. Although Reynolds eventually did advise Brannan to obey the order, Brannan did not.

Regardless of the mix-up over orders and Brannan, the Fourth Division's unit integrity and strong defensive position was to serve them well during the initial attack by Confederate troops. At 10:00 A.M., Brigadier General S.A.M. Wood's brigade of Major General Patrick Cleburne's division marched across the Poe field toward the position of the Fourth Division's two brigades. When in range of the Third Division, Turchin's brigade "rose and gave them a thunderous volley which ran from right to left like lightning on the edge of a dark cloud."⁸ Due to the breastworks, favorable terrain, and

compact Union positions, the Confederates virtually could not see the defenders and were unable to effectively return fire.

Soon the Confederates were within range of King's brigade. The Seventy-Fifth Indiana poured a deadly fire into the advancing troops. A section of the Twenty-First Indiana battery joined in with the musketry of the Sixty-Eighth Indiana to repulse the assault. As described by David Floyd of the Seventy-Fifth Indiana: "Officers with drawn swords and pistols threw themselves in front of the retiring crowd, and by every device which physical and mental nature for the moment could invent, they tried to rally and reform the the column of men from the broken mass of humanity that was retreating over Poe field."⁹

Due to the protected position, Reynolds' division did not suffer many casualties in this initial attack. However, Cleburne's official report noted that for the Confederates "five hundred men were killed and wounded by this fire in a few minutes."¹⁰ Unlike the confusion of the previous day, there were no fleeing Union regiments.

Next, Bate's brigade of Stewart's division assaulted the Fourth Division's breastworks around 11:00 A.M. The charging Confederates let out a yell as they streamed across the field. Again, at short range, the two brigades let loose a ferocious fire of musket and cannon, effectively stopping the second assault. At 11:30 A.M., the Confederates retreated, leaving a writhing mass of bodies on the field. Again, casualties in Reynolds' brigades were low due to the effective fortifications.

Unity of command, fortified positions and defensible terrain had been the difference during the initial assaults during the morning of the twentieth. Along the Fourth Division's front, the Confederates had taken enormous casualties, perhaps

expecting the Union troops to behave as they had the day before. The repulse had certainly inspired confidence in the two brigades.

As the last Confederates were retreating from Reynolds' front in Poe field, a disaster was about to occur. Shortly after 11:00 A.M., despite his front being alive with skirmish fire, Wood pulled his division out of line, positioning to the west of Brannan and Reynolds. Wood's actions effectively left a gap in the Union line, just as Longstreet was ordering his wing into action along the Union right and center. Confederate troops streamed through the gap created by Wood, and by 11:45 A.M. the lead regiments were in Dyer field, nearly one-half mile west of Lafayette road. Brannan's division was swept from the field, and he attempted to establish a new defensive position to the rear at Snodgrass Hill. By noon, Rosecrans was forced to abandon his headquarters, and proceeded north intent on rejoining Thomas. Unable to reach Thomas due to the advancing Confederates, he left the field shortly after 12:00 noon.

Though confusion reigned about him, Reynolds was able to conduct a counterstroke against the surging Confederate column. As Brannan's division crumbled, Reynolds realized that his right flank was in peril. He hastily rode up to Major George Perkins and ordered the One Hundred Fifth Ohio, in reserve, to conduct a counterattack on the Confederate flank. Reynolds ordered, "Attention, battalion! Shoulder arms!"¹¹ The regiment, realizing what was coming, sprang to its feet. They turned to the south and proceeded through the dense foliage. With bayonets fixed, they charged into the Confederate column. Startled by the bold assault, the column scattered, not knowing the size of the Union force. Major Perkins was wounded in the leg and command fell to Captain Edwards.¹² After one-half mile, the regiment halted and reformed their lines.

The Confederates soon started closing in, and the regiment retreated, not exactly sure where they would go. Despite the eventual withdrawal, the audacious attack confused the Confederates long enough to allow Brannan to reform his shattered division in a defensible position on Snodgrass Hill. The gamble paid off.

After the withdrawal of the Union right wing, the Union line was reduced to a concentration of forces on Horseshoe Ridge and Kelly field, with a six hundred-yard gap between them. In Kelly field, from north to south were arrayed the divisions of Baird, Johnson, Palmer, and Reynolds. Throughout the afternoon it was relatively quiet along Reynolds' front, although the Confederates had launched a series of assaults on the Union position on Snodgrass Hill. Reynolds's right flank was unprotected, and soon a column of Confederates threatened his position and an enemy battery was firing in to his rear area. Reynolds shifted King's brigade two hundred yards to the north and east of Lafayette road facing south, slightly to the rear of Turchin. Left to right was the Sixty-Eighth Indiana, the Seventy-Fifth Indiana, and the One Hundred First Indiana. The Nineteenth Indiana battery was placed between King and Turchin's brigades.¹³ Turchin reformed his lines left to right with the Thirty-Sixth Ohio and Eleventh Ohio in the front and the Ninety-Second Ohio and Eighteenth Kentucky in the rear. Four pieces of artillery from the Twenty-First Indiana Battery were placed in the front and two were placed in reserve.¹⁴ The total extent of the Union right's collapse was unknown to the generals in Kelly field, and the firing continued to the west on Horseshoe Ridge.

Confederate sharpshooters maintained a steady fire into Reynolds' position, and eventually found a target. During the general lull along the front, Colonel King was killed instantly by a bullet that struck him just above the right eye. He had remained

active throughout the early afternoon, organizing his defenses as he rode about his regiments. As the aim of the sharpshooters improved, members of the brigade had begged him to take cover. As he finally relented, and began to dismount, he was hit.¹⁵ His would be one of the few Union bodies to be recovered from the battlefield during the battle. Command fell to Colonel Milton Robinson.

By 4:00 P.M., Reynolds' division was in a tenuous situation. There had been various shifting of the lines as the threat from the right increased. Although he still maintained two lines, and King's brigade had been refused to the right, facing south, there was a half-mile gap between his right and the defenders on Snodgrass Hill. Although not under direct attack, Confederate units had gained his right and rear and were shelling his position. The breastworks in front of Turchin's brigade had caught fire, and the Eleventh Ohio lost thirteen men in a short period of time trying to save the fortifications.¹⁶ Many of the regiments had been out of ammunition for some time. In his official report Reynolds stated: "At this time the division was out of ammunition, except such as was gathered from the boxes of the dead, and the enemy was between us and our ammunition train; but for this circumstance we could have held out indefinitely."¹⁷ Eventually, Captain John Barker, the inspector general from Thomas's staff personally delivered some ammunition to the Thirty-Sixth Ohio.

Although there was a need to do something to alleviate the situation, it appears that Reynolds' will to resist on this part of the battlefield was beginning to wane. There had been no direct contact with Thomas throughout the afternoon, and the division commanders in Kelly field were left to speculate on what had happened to the Union

army. Rumors circulated that Rosecrans and the corps commanders had all been killed or captured. Palmer in his personal recollections recalls:

About this time, the commander of one of the divisions near my own, approached me and said I was now the ranking officer on the field, and that I ought to order a retreat of the divisions left to Chattanooga. He said the right and the center of the army were defeated, and no doubt Rosecrans and Thomas killed, or in the hands of the enemy . . . I told him, however . . . I had rather be killed, and be damned, than be damned by the country for leaving the battlefield under such circumstances.¹⁸

It can be surmised that the division officer was probably Reynolds due to other conversations during the afternoon. Reynolds discussed with Turchin the possibility of surrender according to one post war account. After the meeting, Turchin was heard saying, "I not surrender; I take my brigade and charge right out of this." Reynolds then replied, "All right General; you can try it."¹⁹ As Confederate activity increased to his right and rear, Reynolds was also observed removing his shoulder straps and remarking that "we would have to surrender."²⁰

By late afternoon of the second day, Reynolds' taste for battle had all but disappeared. His actions and words made it obvious to his division that he had lost the willingness to continue the fight. For the second day in a row, his right flank was unprotected and Confederate troops were on his right and rear. While overall information and guidance from Thomas was lacking, Reynolds did not propose his own options to alleviate the predicament. Certainly a more concerted effort to remedy the ammunition shortage would have been beneficial.

Late in the afternoon, command direction was forthcoming. During this time, Rosecrans drafted an order that directed Thomas to "take a strong position and assume a threatening attitude at Rossville."²¹ Thomas received the order at 4:30 P.M. After

initially balking at withdrawing the army, Thomas decided to obey the order, commencing with Reynolds's division on the Kelly field line. After turning over the defense of Horseshoe Ridge to Granger, Thomas headed off towards the Lafayette road to personally direct the movement.

Reynolds certainly exhibited a feeling of relief when he received the order to withdraw his division from Kelly field. The withdrawal was to become complicated, however, due to a movement by Confederate Brigadier General St. John Liddell's division. Brigades led by Colonel Daniel Govan and Brigadier General Edward Walthall had crossed west of the Lafayette road north of the Kelly field salient. This movement not only threatened the Union escape route to Rossville, but also immediately threatened the rear of Thomas' two wings. As Thomas rode towards Reynolds, he became aware of the new threat and searched for a unit to assault the force.²²

Despite confusion, Reynolds' division would play a key role in relieving the threat to the Union lines. Upon receipt of the order to withdraw, Reynolds marched his division in two columns on the Lafayette road toward Rossville. He was soon met by Thomas who directed him to form his division, perpendicular to the road, so Reynolds shifted the head of the column to the west, with his right resting on the road. Thomas pointed toward the direction of Rossville, and the brigades of Govan and Walthall, and said, "there they are, clear them out." In his report, Reynolds wrote, "I understood that this movement was intended to open the way to Rossville for the army, and did not know of any other road to that point. I therefore pressed right on in the charge, expecting the whole division to do the same until the rebel lines and batteries were cleared."²³ Perhaps fatigue and weariness were setting in, or the excitement hindered communications

between Reynolds and Thomas, because the sequence of events did not proceed as expected.

The Third Brigade would perform superbly in the last, and one of the few, Union assaults of the battle. Once Turchin clarified the exact position of the Confederate force, he faced his brigade about, and marching by rear rank, proceeded to the northwest. As Turchin describes in his report, "The command "forward" was given; some few shots were exchanged; I gave the order to charge."²⁴ Reynolds went along with the brigade, on the extreme right, to perhaps expedite the move, which Thomas desired. During the enthusiastic but disorganized charge, Turchin had his horse shot out from under him by a Confederate battery, and proceeded on foot. After the first engagement with the Confederate flank, Turchin ordered the brigade to veer to the left to join McCook's brigade of the Reserve Corps, located on a ridge.²⁵ About one-third of the Eleventh Ohio, including Colonel Lane, a company of the Thirty-Sixth Ohio and some remnants of the Ninety-Second Ohio, including Reynolds, continued one-quarter mile up the Lafayette road towards Rossville. The small band of one hundred and fifty sighted some Confederate cavalry in the woods, and halted, realizing they were isolated from the rest of the brigade.

For the second time that day, Reynolds found himself in a trying situation, and he stumbled. He once again directed his men to surrender. As recounted by Sergeant Major Rob Adney of the Thirty-Sixth Ohio: "Here General Reynolds, not knowing that we had cut our way through the enemy but thinking us still surrounded gave us positive orders not to fire when the enemy came upon us as it would only exasperate him to kill us in our

tracks. That meant ignominious surrender and rebel prisons. If men ever swore both loud and deep it was there."²⁶

Captain Henry of the Thirty-Sixth Ohio became aware of the situation and went to address Reynolds. Henry explained that the men were unwilling to surrender, and that in his judgment, surrender was unnecessary. Reynolds asked for a proposed course of action, and Henry recommended an attempt to get to Chattanooga.²⁷ Reynolds agreed, but before they could make that move, the group met some members of McCook's brigade, and was soon rejoined with the rest of the Third Brigade on the ridge.²⁸ The charge by Turchin's brigade had effectively removed the Confederate threat and resulted in the capture of two hundred and fifty prisoners and two cannon. The losses to Reynolds' division were minimal.

It is clear that in the closing hours of the second day, Reynolds was anxious to quit the battlefield by any means available. His enthusiastic charge up Lafayette road towards Rossville was less a misunderstanding of Thomas's intent, but more an effort to take the most expeditious route to safety. His inability to see what his junior officers observed, namely that surrender was not necessary, was due to a willingness to capitulate to the enemy, and again be off the battlefield. Most disturbing was the direction to not fire at the enemy, because it might provoke a return fire. This brings into question Reynolds' physical courage. The indignation was intense when events were relayed to the rest of the Third Brigade on the ridge. Captain Curtis, Turchin's Adjutant General remarked, "Boys, we have all had hell for two days. I had two horses shot under me, and came out afoot, but when any G_d D__n man tells you that you have to surrender, don't you believe him. You don't have to surrender."²⁹

Unbeknownst to Reynolds at the time, half his division was being directed by Thomas. Thomas had directed Robinson and the Second Brigade to occupy a position atop the ridge along the McFarland Gap road to "hold the ground while the troops on our right and left pass by."³⁰ Once Reynolds arrived, he was given command of this covering force. Presumably, these were the retreating troops of Horseshoe Ridge and the Kelly field salient. Thomas soon arrived on the scene and ordered the Sixty-Eighth Indiana and One Hundred First Indiana be detached from the brigade and sent to his headquarters on Snodgrass Hill. Upon learning that the remaining troops on Horseshoe Ridge required instructions for their retreat, Thomas turned to Lieutenant Colonel Doan of the One Hundred First Indiana and inquired whether they had any ammunition. Doan replied they were partially supplied, and Thomas directed that the One Hundred First Indiana and Sixty-Eighth relieve the Ninth Indiana and Thirty-Fifth Ohio. Upon arriving near Horseshoe Ridge, they covered the retreat of the two regiments. The Sixty-Eighth Indiana would be the last Federal unit to quit the field.³¹

Unlike the first day of the battle, Reynolds was engaged in the direction of his division during events on September 20. Throughout the morning and afternoon, he was actively involved in the positioning and movement of the division. He certainly played a role in ensuring adequate defensive works were erected, which provided superb protection for the regiments. When Confederate troops were pouring through the gap to his immediate right, he personally directed the charge of the One Hundred Fifth Ohio, effectively buying time for the Union troops rallying the defenses on Horseshoe Ridge.

The Fourth Division's preparation and unit integrity served them well on the second day at Chickamauga. Fortifications, although hastily erected, were to prove

formidable against the charging Confederate forces during the morning engagements. Despite the disastrous break in the Union line, leaving the right flank unprotected, the division maintained its position throughout a long afternoon of uncertainty and lack of ammunition. The charges of the One Hundred Fifth Ohio and Turchin's brigade were some of the few effective examples of initiative displayed by the Union army during a day of defensive warfare.

Despite his earlier positive actions, at some point during the long afternoon, Reynolds began to lose his willingness to resist. He freely discussed surrender with his subordinates in Kelly field and on the Lafayette road. This is not the leadership expected of a division commander in a pitched battle. Other than surrender or retreat from the battlefield, Reynolds did not address options to resist the enemy. His readiness to submit to Confederate capture without resistance is an indication of desperation to remove himself from a difficult situation, no matter the cost. Also, it appears that soldiers of his division did not agree with his assessment of the situation, which means he had the means at hand to resist. Finally, his unwillingness to provoke an engagement with the Confederates on Lafayette road, which may have led to escape, indicates a lack of physical courage.

The Fourth Division performed well on the second day, although Reynolds did not. He did well in arraying his division in supporting and defensible positions, which resulted in a solid repulse of a determined Confederate attack. He also displayed initiative in directing the One Hundred Fifth Ohio to distract the Confederate breakthrough. This behavior, however, does not outweigh the poor performance of the

afternoon. His willingness to openly discuss surrender in front of subordinates demonstrated poor generalship.

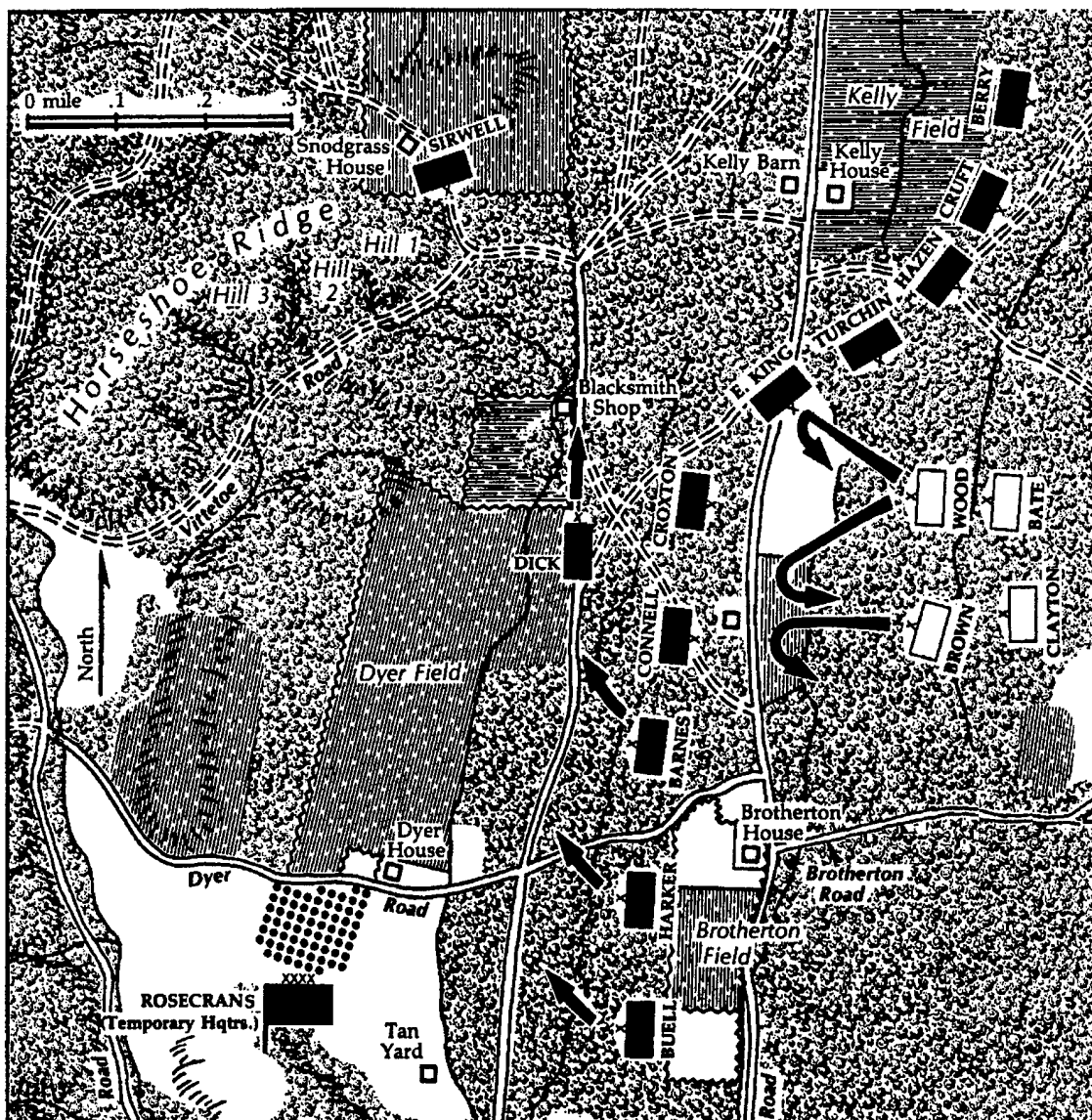


Figure 3. September 20 (Late Morning)

- ¹Peter Cozzens, *This Terrible Sound*, 295.
- ²*O.R.*, pt.1, 251.
- ³*Ibid.*, 441.
- ⁴*Ibid.*, 474.
- ⁵High, *History of the Sixty-Eighth Regiment*, 86.
- ⁶Cozzens, *This Terrible Sound*, 60.
- ⁷*O.R.* pt.1, 635.
- ⁸Tourgee, *The Story of a Thousand*, 222.
- ⁹Floyd, *History of the Seventy-Fifth Regiment*, 158.
- ¹⁰*Ibid.*, 159.
- ¹¹Tourgee, *The Story of a Thousand*, 223.
- ¹²*Ibid.*, 224.
- ¹³High, *History of the Sixty-Eighth Regiment*, 92.
- ¹⁴*O.R.*, pt.1, 474.
- ¹⁵High, *History of the Sixty-Eighth Regiment*, 96.
- ¹⁶*O.R.*, pt.1, 480.
- ¹⁷*Ibid.*, 442.
- ¹⁸John Palmer, *The Personal Recollections of John M. Palmer: The Story of an Earnest Life* (Cincinnati, OH: The Robert Clarke Co., 1901), 183-184.
- ¹⁹John Booth, "Turchin's Brigade Cut Their way through the Rebels," *The National Tribune*, 16 October 1890.
- ²⁰Hiram Devol, *Biographical Sketch*, (Kansas City, MO: Hudson-Kimberly Publishing Co., 1903), 38.

²¹*O.R.*, pt. 1, 141.

²²*Ibid.*, 253.

²³*Ibid.*, 442.

²⁴*Ibid.*, 475.

²⁵*Ibid.*

²⁶Robert C. Adney to Ella Adney Delay, Unit Files, Chickamauga-Chattanooga National Military Park, Ft. Oglethorpe, GA, n.d.

²⁷Booth, *Turchin's Brigade*, 6.

²⁸Turchin, *Chickamauga*, 152.

²⁹Ella Adney.

³⁰*O.R.* pt. 1, 254.

³¹High, *History of the Sixty-Eighth Regiment*, 99.

CHAPTER 6

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION

The Battle of Chickamauga was a clear Confederate victory. Although the Union Army retained possession of Chattanooga, it was decisively pushed off the battlefield and had many of its units routed. This was clearly not the end state envisioned by the Federal high command.

Repercussions were swift, as a debacle of this magnitude had not been seen since the Battle of the First Bull Run. The actions and leadership of many Union commanders were brought into question in an effort to sort out the reasons for such a crushing defeat. Rosecrans, McCook, Crittenden, and Negley officially lost their commands due to their actions and decisions at Chickamauga. During the month proceeding the battle, the Army of the Cumberland underwent a significant restructuring in an attempt to correct leadership deficiencies and manpower losses.

While the performance of the Fourth Division was adequate, Reynolds' performance at Chickamauga brought out some glaring deficiencies in his ability to command a division. Although he had been in command for nine months, he was totally unprepared for the confusion of a pitched battle. Unlike his experience in western Virginia, at Chickamauga he was up against a determined and aggressive enemy. Stamina, confidence, and the ability to bring order out of chaos were required. Operating strictly on the defensive during the two-day battle, he did not exhibit the motivation and sense of urgency expected of a division commander.

During the first day of battle, Reynolds essentially piecemealed his division until there was nothing left to command. No other division on the Union side exhibited such

an approach to battle. Both Turchin and King were isolated and without adequate guidance from their division commander. Reynolds was completely unaware of Turchin's engagements and perhaps a greater involvement in King's mission would have prevented such a rapid collapse of the Second Brigade. Reynolds' decision to remain with a single battery instead of becoming more engaged with the desperate fight in front of him was an unusual command decision. Although one of the most senior division commanders in the army, he exhibited no attempt to exert leadership where it was sorely lacking. He apparently felt comfortable with the battery because of his training as an artillery officer. His efforts at directing artillery support assisted in the overall effort, but also may have caused rounds to fall on Union soldiers. Eventually, Hazen, not Reynolds, directed the decisive artillery engagement, at the close of the first day. Reynolds' actions clearly indicated that the shock of battle and his relative inexperience affected his performance.

On September 20, 1863, Reynolds' performance indicated a lack of resolve and eventually a weariness that jeopardized his command. On the positive side, his efforts to direct the establishment of adequate defensive positions and maintain positive control of his brigades were an improvement over the previous day. But as the day progressed, he began to lose the will to resist. Again, although a senior division commander, he did not provide inspirational leadership during the long afternoon on Kelly field. His open willingness to discuss surrender with his subordinates, instead of developing proposals to address a desperate situation, demonstrated a lack of confidence in himself and his division. The reckless attack down the Lafayette road is another indication of Reynolds' complete loss of resolve. In his haste to retreat to Rossville, he jeopardized not only one

hundred and fifty men, but also the effort of his entire division. Again, he openly discussed surrender as the only alternative. Even more so, he overplayed the desperation of the situation and even directed his command to offer no resistance. Reynolds had clearly had his fill of battle.

In the manner of the day, in post-battle reports, superiors praised the performance of their subordinate commanders. Rosecrans' official report even praises Crittenden and McCook. In Thomas's official report, he stated, "All the troops under my immediate command fought most gallantly on both days, and were ably handled by their respective commanders."¹ In fact, Thomas praised all of his division commanders, which minimized the effect. The official reports in general displayed only the positive attributes of what in some cases were clearly dismal performances. It is natural that military comrades and professionals will not willingly volunteer unsolicited negative information on a fellow officer, or even a subordinate's, performance in battle. Such remarks are usually reserved for official inquiries, court martials, or unofficial statements. As such, official reports must be placed in their proper context.

Reynolds' official report is quite spare, given his division's active role in the two-day battle. It is dated September 23, 1863, less than three days after the battle. It was submitted at least five days, and more closer on average, to a week sooner than any other division commander's report in the Fourteenth Corps. Also, it was submitted prior to the receipt of any brigade or regimental reports, which is different from any other division report. Much of the lack of information the first day can be attributed to his lack of contact with his division. Regardless, he poorly documented even his own movements and actions with the artillery. His report similarly conveys vagueness on his division's

activities on the second day. The report is neither defensive nor self-serving, just lacking in any significant detail.² Uncomfortable with his performance, and uncertain in how his actions were perceived, Reynolds most likely submitted his report expeditiously to avoid official disagreements with subordinates' reports. Also, an expeditious report generally receives less scrutiny.

The complete cost of the all the Second Brigade reports is curious, given the meticulous attention given to official records. There is evidence that Reynolds did in fact receive these reports. In discussing the matter with Reynolds, the brigade commander Colonel Robinson stated, "After talking the matter over, he [Reynolds] came to the conclusion that the reports of the regiments in our brigade had been placed by him together and lost."³ It is hard to believe that an experienced officer such as Reynolds would carelessly misplace such important documentation.

Overall, the division's performance during the first day of battle was mixed. In a mediocre Union performance, the division did no better, or worse, than most other divisions. In fact, Turchin's brigade was one of the few Federal units to take the fight to the enemy. As expected, the more experienced Third Brigade fared better than the less experienced Second Brigade. With the exception of Turchin's brigade, the division did little to affect the outcome of the day's events. King's brigade was effectively run off the battlefield and ceased to exist as a fighting entity. On September 19, due to the piecemeal division disposition, Reynolds' actions essentially minimized division effectiveness. Once engaged, Reynolds did not play a role in division performance due to his unwillingness to exert his leadership.

On the second day at Chickamauga, the division performed with modest distinction. Operating behind prepared breastworks, the division did repel a ferocious, but foolhardy and short lived, Confederate assault. During the inactivity of the long afternoon, the division did not have the opportunity to distinguish itself. As we have seen, the uncertainty of the day's events did begin to affect some of the leadership. The loss of Colonel King did not appear to have affected the Second Brigade's morale. Reynolds' discussion of surrender did not sit well with Turchin, and most likely resulted in a loss of confidence between Reynolds and the Third Brigade commander. Overall, the division played a key role in holding the right flank of the Kelly field salient and clearing the way for the Federal retreat.

During the two-day battle, Reynolds' leadership tended to minimize his division's effectiveness resulting in an average division performance. The division did little to distinguish itself at Chickamauga, but in a mediocre Union effort, it is popular to enhance the effect of any Federal success. Turchin's charge at the end of the second day was certainly significant, but as we have seen, Reynolds' action actually detracts from the overall effort. Furthermore, Reynolds' willingness to capitulate to the enemy hints at a lack of moral, as well as physical courage, which hindered the overall performance of the Fourth Division, itself.

As expected, changes to the Union army came rather swiftly. Thomas received command of the Army of the Cumberland and Major General John Palmer assumed command of the Fourteenth Corps. On October 9, 1863, the Fourteenth Corps was reorganized and Reynolds relinquished division command. The Fourth Division, Fourteenth Corps, became the Third Division, commanded by Brigadier General

Absalom Baird. Turchin became commander of the First Brigade, which was composed primarily of the same regiments he commanded at Chickamauga. The regiments of King's brigade were assigned to the Second brigade in Palmer's division, along with the Nineteenth Indiana Battery. Wilder's brigade became an independent entity called the Mounted Infantry Brigade, along with the Eighteenth Indiana Battery. The Twenty-first Indiana Battery was assigned to the Second Division of the Artillery Reserve commanded by Brannan.⁴

Perhaps due to his performance at Chickamauga, Reynolds never again commanded troops in the field during the Civil War. For the last two years of the war, he shuffled among various assignments that took him further from the action. After turning over his division to Baird, he became Thomas' Chief of Staff from October 10, 1863 to December 5, 1863. His remaining assignments would essentially be caretaker roles, commanding disparate units, which were not involved in combat. From January to June 1864, he commanded a division assigned to the defense of New Orleans. From July 7, 1864 to November 7, 1864, he was assigned command of the Nineteenth Corps in New Orleans. Finally, from December 22, 1864 to August 1, 1865, he was assigned as Commander of the Department of Arkansas in Little Rock.⁵

Reynolds remained in the army after the Civil War. Upon the expansion of the army in 1866, he became a colonel in the Twenty-sixth Infantry. From 1866 to 1870 he commanded the Fifth Military District, overseeing reconstruction efforts in Texas and Louisiana. He was assigned to the Third Cavalry Regiment in 1870 and commanded the occupation forces in the southwest including the Department of Texas. In 1874 he gained command of a regiment at Fort D. A. Russell in Wyoming.

Reynolds' final command was commander of the Third Cavalry in 1876. On February 27, General George Crook, commander of the Department of the Platte, designated Reynolds as commander of the Big Horn Expedition. The command consisted of twelve companies numbering thirty officers and 662 men. Its mission was a late winter offensive against the Sioux Indians located in southern Montana. On March 1, the expedition departed Fort Fetterman in Wyoming and proceeded north with Crook accompanying the column. On March 16, after two weeks of fruitless search, army scouts found a trail leading to a Sioux village on the Powder River.⁶

Reynolds' performance during the attack on the Sioux village on March 17 ended his career. Crook assigned Reynolds as commander of a three battalion (two companies each) mobile strike force, numbering fifteen officers and 359 men. Departing at 5:00 P.M. on September 16, the force arrived west of the village at 6:00 A.M. on March 17. After scouts confirmed that the village was still asleep, Reynolds quickly formulated a plan. A battalion led by Captain Henry Noyes stormed the village from the south; one company cut out 700 Indian ponies and drove them north, and the other company distracted the villagers. A second battalion led by Captain Alexander Moore was supposed to ambush the scattering Indians, but it never got into position. The village was caught by surprise, but the two hundred braves quickly recovered. Reynolds' directed the reserve battalion led by Captain Anson Mills into the village. Moore's battalion also arrived, but the situation was drastically changed. Now 200 braves, who held the high ground west of the river, attacked the 374 soldiers. Although not in danger of being overrun, with casualties mounting and undisciplined troops salvaging meat and robes from tepees, Reynolds ordered the village burned and the force withdrawn. At 1:30 P.M.

the troops retreated, leaving behind a number of dead and at least one wounded soldier. Later that evening the Indians also recaptured about 550 of their ponies, and despite urging from his officers, Reynolds refused to pursue the herd.⁷

The bungled attack and subsequent withdrawal eventually led to Reynolds' resignation. Crook was at first pleased over the destruction of a large Sioux village, but the acrimony among the ranks over the mismanaged attack and inept withdrawal soon reached him. The forlorn expedition returned to Fort Fetterman on March 26 and Crook preferred court martial charges against Reynolds and Moore on March 30.

On March 3, 1877, Reynolds was found guilty by court martial for performance at Powder River. The charges and specifications included disobedience of a lawful command, violation of the 42nd article of war, and conduct prejudicial to good order and discipline. Specifically, he was found guilty of the destruction of Indian property (of use to the U. S.), leaving dead and wounded on the field, and the loss of the pony herd. His sentence was suspension from rank and command for the period of one year. The outgoing president, and former classmate, U. S. Grant, directed that the sentence be remitted, "In view, however, of the long, distinguished, and faithful service of Colonel Reynolds."⁸ Reynolds resigned from the service on June 25, 1877.

Reynolds' performance at Powder River sheds some light on his activities at Chickamauga. While this thesis does not conduct an exhaustive study of Reynolds' post-Civil War career, a quick analysis of the Big Horn Expedition does provide some insight on the man. The willingness to abandon the field despite an ability to resist is very similar to actions taken on the second day at Chickamauga. The faults that were officially overlooked in the confusion of Chickamauga were hard to disregard in the

spotlight at Powder River. Again, we see a commander who rapidly narrowed his options during a crisis.

This analysis raises a few items worthy of further study. Both Palmer and Brannan's divisions played key roles in both days of the battle, but there are few details on these divisions. A study of Brannan's movements the night of 19-20 September would be particularly useful, since confusion over his location helped cause the gap in the Union line. Why after the battle was he relieved of his division and assigned as artillery commander? Palmer's division was heavily engaged on both days, and he eventually became a corps commander in the Army of the Cumberland. What was seen in his performance to merit such an important field command?

The study of men in battle during the Civil War has much to offer to today's military officer. The challenges faced in battle are for the most part, timeless. A study of Reynolds' division has demonstrated the importance of the principals of war, to include unity of command and mass. Also important are the lessons learned from the human side of leadership and decision making under the high pressures and chaos of war. At times a leader's display of confidence, despite gnawing self-doubt, can mean the difference in the unit's performance. This is of course hard to quantify, and can only be determined by a thorough study of unit and leader performance in battle. Hopefully, this study will add to this body of useful knowledge.

¹*O. R.*, pt. 1, 255.

²*Ibid.*, 440.

³Frank Welcher, *The Union Army*, 273.

⁴Floyd, *History of the Seventy-Fifth Regiment*, 135.

⁵George Cullum, *Biographical Register of the Officers and Graduates of the U. S. Military Academy at West Point, N. Y.*, Vol. 2, (New York: The Riverside Press, 1891), 162.

⁶John Gray, *Centennial Campaign: The Sioux War of 1876*, (FT. Collins, CO: The Old Army Press, 1976), 47.

⁷*Ibid.*, 55-56.

⁸Headquarters of the Army, *General Court Martial*, 3 March 18777, collection number SC1259F7, W. H. Smith Memorial Library, Indiana Historical Society, Indianapolis, IN.

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